

AGRARIAN RELATIONS AND PEASANT IN MODERN ANDHRA

A STUDY OF KALAHASTI ZAMINDARI

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**DEDICATED
TO**

SRI DODLA RAMACHANDRA REDDY

Rector & Correspondent of Jawahar Bharati, Kavali whose helping nature, positive thinking, and decades of untiring efforts and sacrifices for the spread of education remain for ever in history.

PREFACE

This book is a natural outgrowth of research interests I have pursued over the past one decade on agrarian relations or land tenures, peasant movements or anti-British revolts and in general the economic history of Andhra in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Having written sporadically on various themes of agrarian and peasant history of Andhra Region my efforts were directed towards pulling some of these strands together into a coherent history of agrarian relations and peasant in Andhra in general and the particular in Kalahasti Zamindari, with its historical account at the beginning.

The book contains eight chapters. In the first chapter the establishment of British power over Kalahasti Zamindari, topography, administrative divisions, population and peshcush of Kalahasti are given in order to have a clear picture of the zamindari. The second chapter deals with the relations of Kalahasti with the Indian ruling dynasties. The third chapter gives details about the aspects of the British-Kalahasti relations. The fourth chapter is devoted for an account of the pre-British revenue system in Kalahasti. The fifth chapter deals with the system to payments of the establishment in Kalahasti and suffering of ryots under the system. The sixth chapter surveys the effects of the systems of revenue and payments in Kalahasti before the establishment of British rule. The seventh chapter deals with the permanent settlement of the revenues in Andhra in general and in particular in Kalahasti Zamindari as introduced by the British East India Company. The eighth chapter synthesizes the conclusions arrived at from the above study with a comparison with other systems of revenue. At the end of the book references of all the chapters are given.

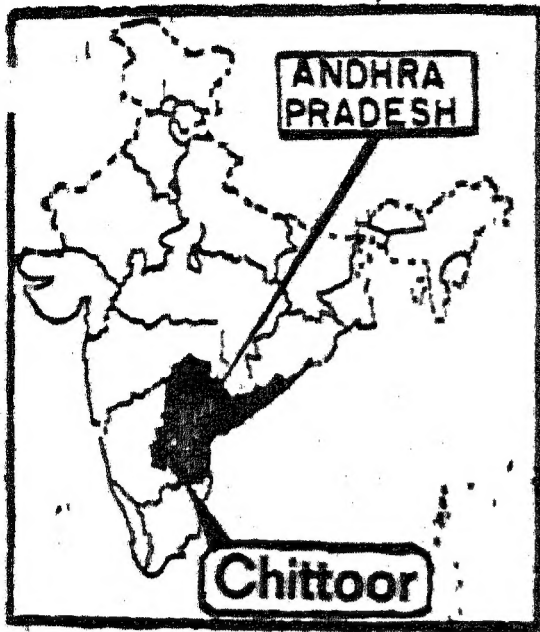
What is presented here is the result of many years of work in the records of the East India Company and on contemporary literature. Much of this work was carried out when I was working as a Lecturer in History in Jawahar Bharati (Autonomous college)

at Kavali, which meant that often its progress had to give way to the prior demands of teaching and of Department and college matters. The college and especially its Rector & Correspondent, Dodla Ramachandra Reddy has given every encouragement to research through helpful attitude and academic freedom on the campus. During periods of my stay in Madras I was able to work in the Tamil Nadu Archives and Connemera Library. In both these repositories I have met with much kindness and the utmost cooperation from the staff. To all these institutions and persons I record my grateful thanks. Over the years I have profited from the work and friendship of a number of historians. Of them Professor V. Kameswara Rao of S.V. University. To all of them I am profoundly grateful. I am also thankful to the editors of Social Scientist, Itihas, Quarterly Review of Historical Studies and Proceedings of the A.P.H.C. for permitting to use summaries of certain portions of my articles published in them.

DEVIREDDY SUBRAMANYAM REDDY

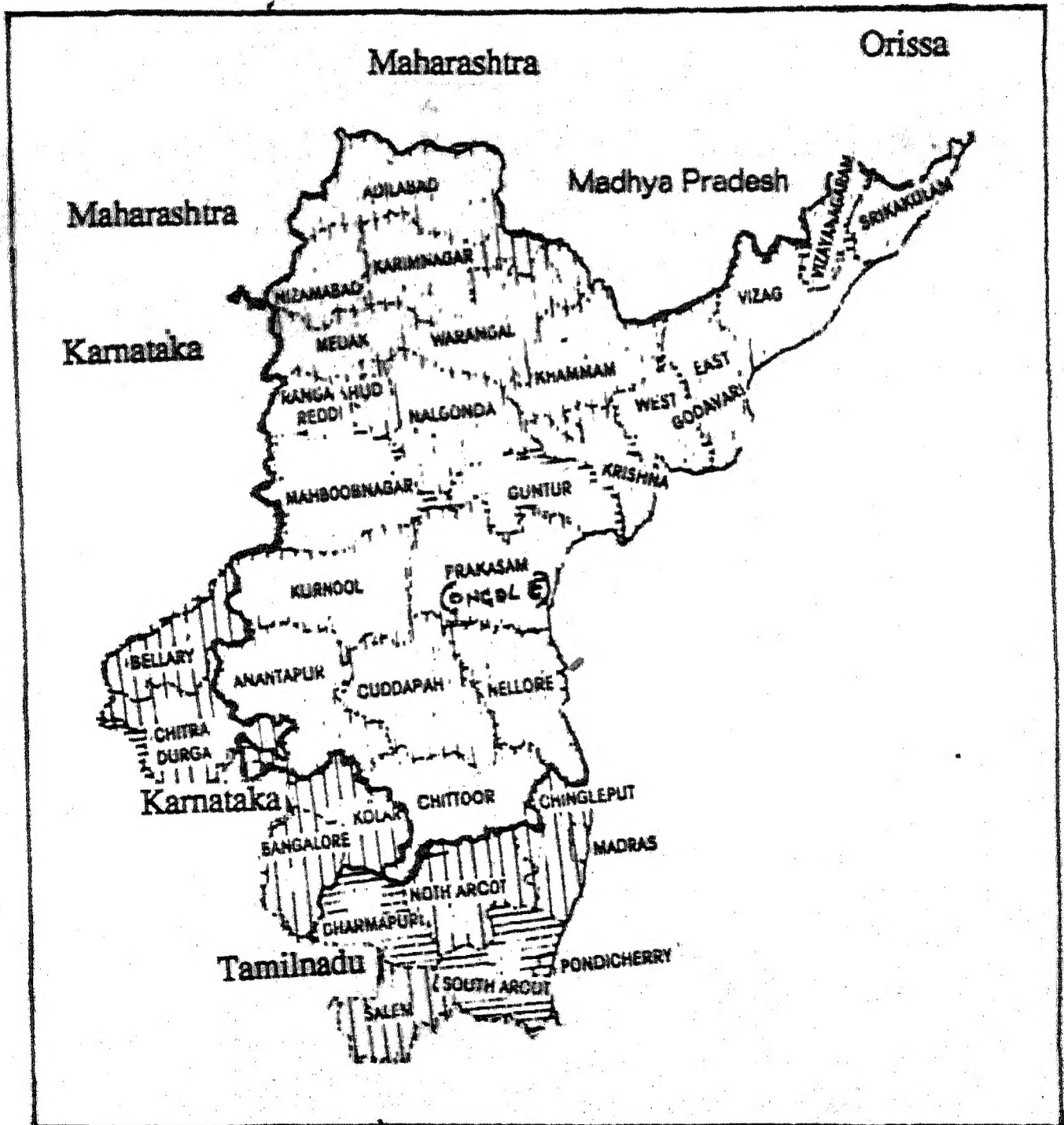
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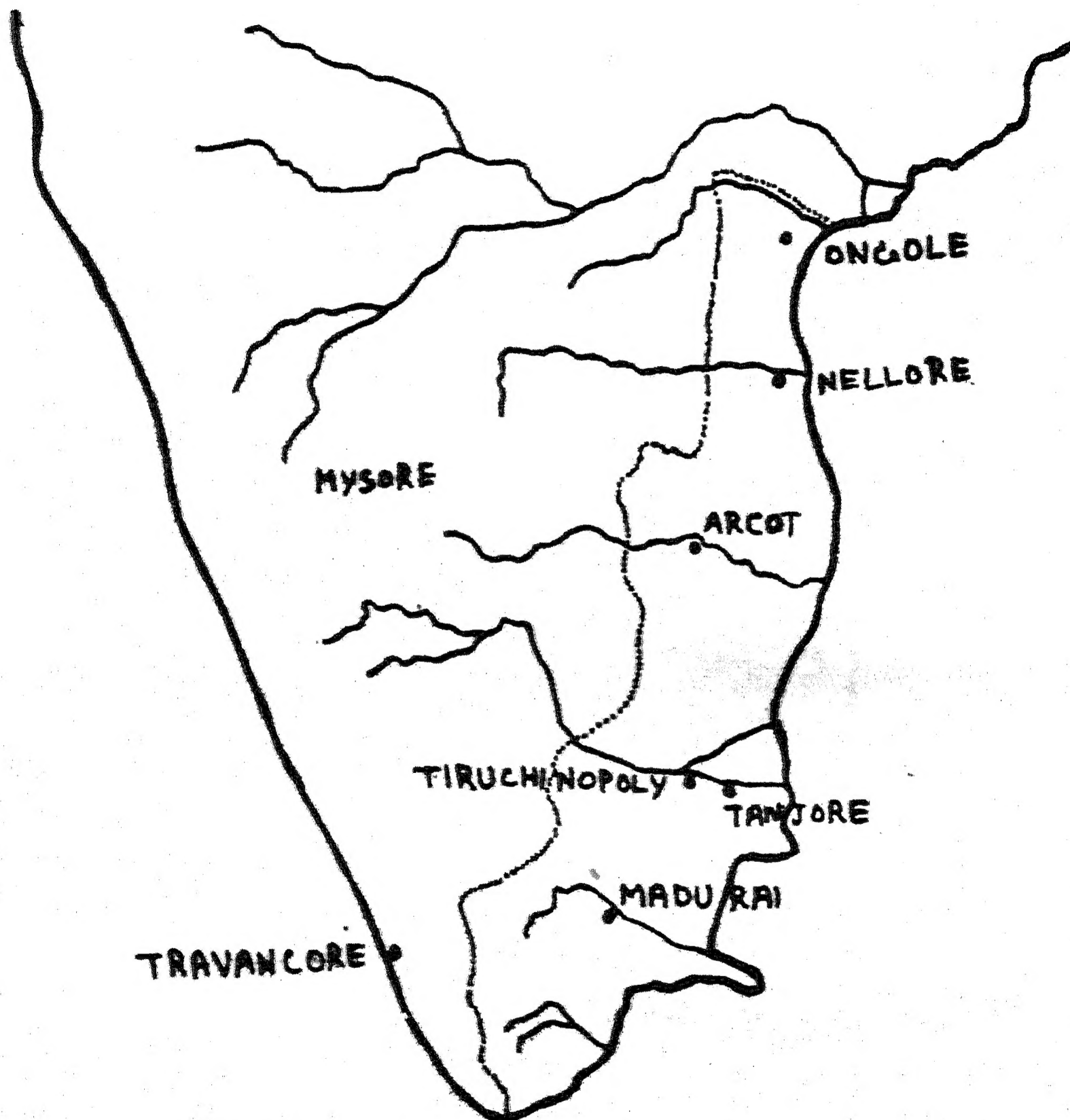


INDIA

Andhra Pradesh

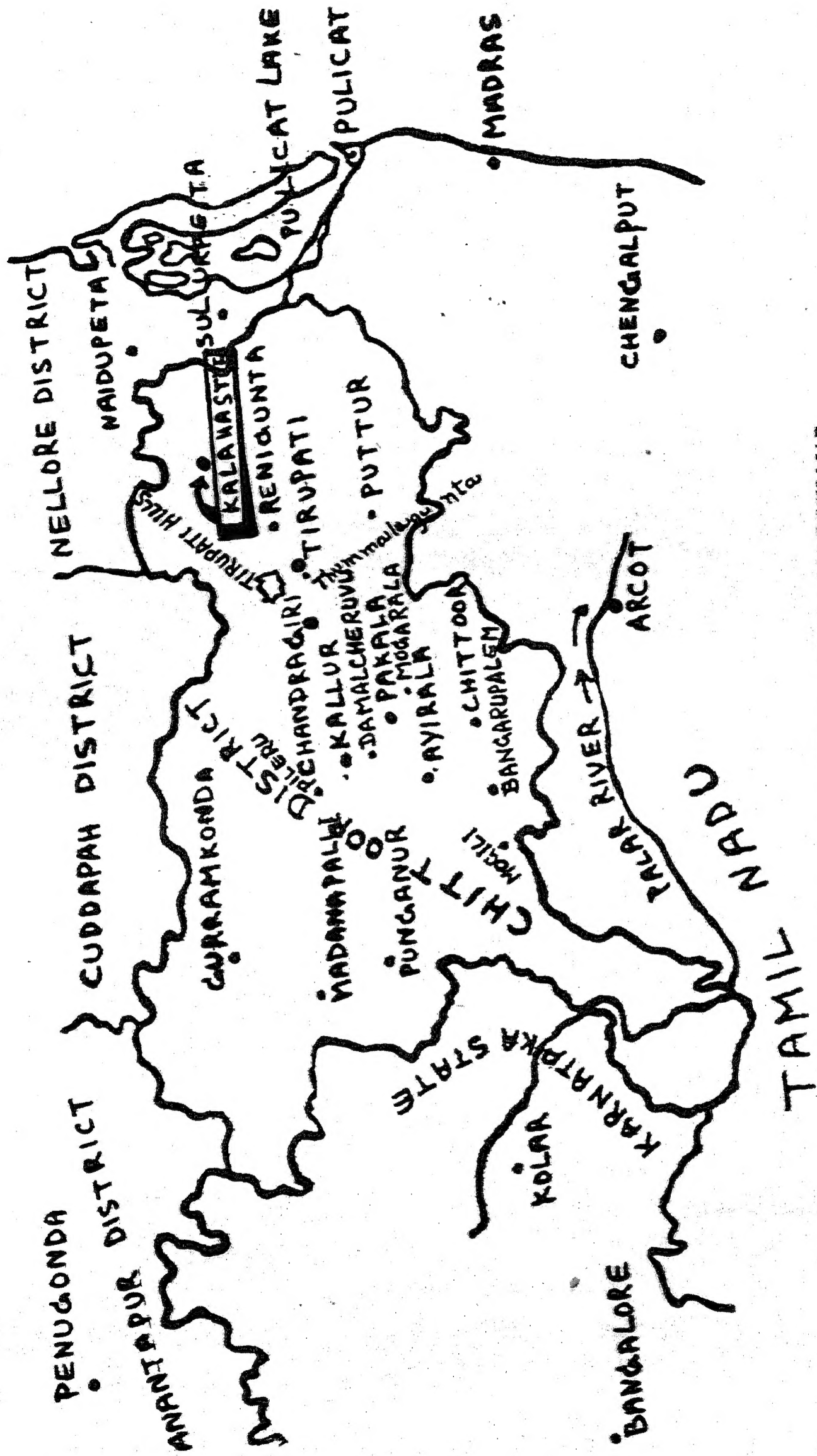


THE CARNATIC 1710-1801



SOURCE : DR. K. RAJAYYAN, ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIETY
IN THE CARNATIC, 1701-1801, TIRUPATI, 1966

CHITTOR DISTRICT



SOURCE : B.S. KAUSHAL, ANDHRA PRADESH MAP,
INDIAN BOOK DEPOT PUBLICATION, DELHI, 1970

THE ZAMINDARI OF KALAHASTI

Aspects of the Establishment of British power, Topography
Administrative divisions, Population and Peshcush:

When the English East India Company established its authority over the Kalahasti Zamindari in 1801 A.D. it formed part of the then administrative unit called the "Western Pollams" which comprised of the four pollams of palem^{*} of Kalahasti, Karvetinagar (Bommaraju), Venkatagiri and Sydapur, spreading over a large area, mostly in the present Nellore and Chittoor districts of Andhra Pradesh. These pollams called as Zamindaries after the permanent settlement in 1802, first became subject to the British Government under a treaty concluded in 1792 with the Nawab of the Carnatic or Arcot and came to be known as the "western Pollams". By this treaty the chieftains of these Pollams called Poligars or Palegars ceased to own allegiance to the Nawab and came under the British, subject to the payment of the same amount of 'peshcush' (tribute) as had been paid to the Nawab and also to the maintenance of certain military establishments. This latter condition was attached to the tenure of their pollam under the Muslim Government. But in 1800 it was resolved by the British administration to relieve these poligars from the principal condition of their tenure and to commute every military service for an equivalent in money and the same was done in 1802.¹

Of the four pollams mentioned above two of them namely Kalahasti and Karvetinagar were in the "Northern Division of Arcot" (North Arcot district of the Madras Presidency) which included, apart from other areas, a greater part of the present Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. At present the former capitals

* . Palem means a tract of country or district called as Pollam in English, Palemu in Telugu and Palayam in Tamil. The chieftain holding a Pollam was called as Poliger in English, Palegar or Palegadu in Telugu and Palayakkaran in Tamil.

The revenue collections in the Ceded districts rose steeply. In 1800-1801 it was Rs.12 lakhs and within one year in 1801-1802 it rose to Rs. 17 lakhs and to 18 lakhs in 1802-1805 to Rs. 23 lakhs.⁹ Munro was, therefore, obliged to recommend remissions, but they were stalled by the Board of Revenue. The Madras presidency was the most heavily taxed in matters of land revenue. It was calculated that for every one lakh of population the amount collected as land revenue was Rs.10,05,455 in Bengal, Rs.16,71,965 in Bombay and Rs. 23,12,465 in Madras.¹⁰ Savage methods of torture were employed to collect revenues from the people and afraid of the dire consequences, they never complained of it.¹¹ The attitude of the Company was aptly described by Lord Macaulay 'Govern leniently, but send us more money, practice justice and moderation, but send us more money, be the father and oppressor of the people, be just and unjust, moderate and rapacious'.¹² As a result rural indebtedness increased throwing ryots to the mercy of village 'sahukars' (money lenders). On the other hand agriculture was in bad shape with its heavy dependency upon the vagaries of the monsoon, infertile soil, outdated implements and little or no encouragement in the shape of taccavi loans to the peasants either from the government or the zamindars. Moreover the condition of irrigation works was far from satisfactory.¹³ The famines added to the wretchedness of the agricultural population including tenants, weavers and agricultural labourers.

The permanent settlement with its magic touch of land ownership and a permanent assessment, was envisaged to stimulate industry promote agriculture and augment the general wealth and prosperity.¹⁴ It conferred ownership of the land upon the former feudal intermediaries who held political and revenue powers over large tracts of land.¹⁵ The sponsors of the settlement did not care who the land owner was, so long as it was cultivated and land revenue was regularly paid.¹⁶ Unfortunately the rights of the peasants were nowhere defined, and thus the cultivators were exposed to oppression.¹⁷ The Zamindars never showed interest either in improvement of land or agricultural production. The settlement contrary to expectations, did not introduce capitalistic farming in India (it only made ryots to depend on the zamindars).¹⁸ On the other hand several estates were either

auctioned or surrendered because of the inability of the zamindars to pay their peshcush. Thus the failure of the permanent settlement in the Northern Circars led to misrule and anarchy in the sphere of revenue administration.

On the other hand under the ryotwari system, the benefit of every ryot, being a peasant proprietor at a fixed assessment, proved illusory.¹⁹ The fault lay mainly in the overassessment of land and exacting demands of the administration. This made agriculture completely unremunerative and prevented the formation of capital within the agricultural economy. It also blocked the outside capital from entering into the agricultural sector.²⁰ The peasants who were in acute need of cash to pay their land revenues, fell into the hands of 'Sahukars' (Money-lenders) who became de-facto landlords. In many instances the money-lender and the landlord was one and the same.²¹ Vincent Smith says that "the rural population wanted two things, first a light assessment, secondly the minimum of official interference".²² It is very difficult to resist the conclusion that the Company's revenue policy failed to achieve both these. This probably accounts for the delay in the emergence of a powerful middle class during the early British rule, in spite of the introduction of English education in India.

Moreover lack of a proper study of the customs and institutions in the villages, the base of the revenue structure, resulted in the failure of successfully implementing the settlements.²³ Apart from these the British administrators (during the first quarter of the 19th century) were influenced by utilitarian ideas which to a large extent influenced the official policy of Indian land revenue.²⁴ Pressed to pay land revenue in cash the peasants not only borrowed money but also took to the production of cash crops and were thus exposed to the fluctuations of money market.²⁵ The legal system introduced by the British also brought far reaching changes in the agricultural sector. Now poor peasants were placed at the mercy of courts where money-lenders could get favourable decisions by engaging lawyers. Another thing introduced by the British was the system of eviction from land. Earlier, peasants could not be evicted from their lands as the traditional village system was relatively considerate to them. Thus, the break-up of the old political and

economic order had a deep impact on society.²⁶ The conquerors of India prior to the East India Company rule "had effected no more than political change but England had struck at the heart of the social system—in Indian village".²⁷ The English dissolved them not only by allowing up their economical basis but also by their commercial enterprises.²⁸ It is this changing nature of the land revenue policy of the Company that made Baden Powell to sum up the situation as follows: "The revenue chapters.... a record of series of experiments in assessment; reduction and enhancement; changes in one direction and another following each other in somewhat bewildering order....."²⁹

The permanent zamindari system however facilitated regularity in the collection of revenue. It also exempted the Government from the duty of making annual revenue settlements, undertaking of the investigations into fraud in revenue collections and in the money expended in the repairs of reservoirs. It also freed the British from the policy of coercion in enforcing the payment of dues by the Zamindars and poligars.³⁰ The Settlement afforded an easy means of collection. The zamindars were not permitted to injure the customary rights of the ryots and that the Government retained power to protect the rights of the ryots.³¹ Section 2 of Regulation XXV of 1802 conferred the proprietary right in the soil on the zamindars and in order to mitigate the abuse of this section, Regulation IV of 1822 was passed which declared that the former regulation was not intended to define, limit, infringe or destroy the actual rights of the tenants. But unfortunately the rights of the peasants were nowhere defined and thus the cultivators were exposed to oppression since the beginning of its introduction until the tenancy reforms of the 20th century.

That the condition of the ryot who paid various taxes in Andhra was far from favourable condition is evident even from the contemporary writings like that of Chilakamarti poem,³² written in 1895. He wrote that during the British rule in Andhra (which included Kalahasti Zamindari also) the people were oppressed by heavy taxation on land, water, trade, business, timber, vehicles, salt and by the imposition of new taxes like stamp tax, municipal tax and others.

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of these Zamindaries are near Tirupati in Chittoor district. These Zamindaries adjoin each other. In many respects both were precisely in the same condition.² The other two Zamindaries namely Venkatagiri and Sydapur were in Nellore district of the same Presidency. Now this district is also in Andhra Pradesh.

During early nineteenth century Kalahasti Zamindari contained 435 villages and 107 hamlets with an area of 760 square miles and a population of 99604³ (the ratio of which was 132 per square mile). It had an income of Rs. 513294 and it was paying a peshcush of Rs. 378056. With regard to Karvetinagar it possessed 777 villages and 288 hamlets with an area of 882 square miles and a population of 117399 (the ratio of which was 131 per square mile). It had an income of Rs. 459542 and it was paying a peshcush of Rs. 187663.⁴ Both the Zamindaries contained nearly one-fourth of the entire area of the North Arcot district and more than one sixth of the population of the entire district.⁵

When the British established their authority over the Kalahasti Zamindari it consisted of four major divisions. They were: (1) Kalahasti Zamindari which comprised of the two Maghans of Kasbah and kalahasti, Veeraraghavapuram, Yesvarapoor, Chembedu, Venkatapuram, Accoortie, Tondamanad, Kannalle and Katoor, (2) the four pollams named Tripurantikapuram Kullavat, Muttum and Loakee, (3) the Kotta Pollams or new Pollams, so called by way of distinction from those just enumerated from having been more recently attached to the Kalahasti Zamindari, consisting of Saib Naid, Modeppa Naid, Lokachary, Tumbachary and Eaegauvaury Pollams, and (4) the Paragana of Seetharampuram, to the northward adjoining the Kummum (Cumbum or Kambham).⁶

The four pollams of Tripurantikapuram, Kullavat, Muttum and Loakee they were secured at different periods by the Zamindar Venkatapathi Naid (Nayanivar) during the series of 50 years (1745-1795 AD) when he was in the charge of the Kalahasti Zamindari. The original number of pollams thus assumed amounted to nine some of which were incorporated (by him) with the Kalahasti Zamindari or other pollams and the names of others changed as appears by the following list.⁷

Original Pollams	Later Called	Incorporated in
Pamunjeevar Pollam	Tripuranticapuram	
Alwar Pollam	Kullavat	
Muttum Pollam	Muttam	
Nagattoor Pollam		{ Loake Pollam
Chinnappa Naid Pollam		
Rangappa Naid Pollam		
Gollapalli Pollam		
Gundari Pollam		
Lalavagunta Pollam		Eaegauwary Pollam Yesvarapoor Maghan Veeraraghavapuram Maghan

Apart from these pollams nine other pollams were assumed in 1977 of which four, forming part of the Kotta Pollams or new Pollams under Kalahasti viz; Saib Naid, Modappa Naid, Lokachary and Tumbachary, were made over to the Kalahasti Zamindar, four in rent to Bommaraju (Karvetinagar) poligar viz; Moortirajupollam, Chanipollam, Balanaini Pollam and Kistnappa Naid Pollam, and one named Vellore Pollam, and one named Vellore Pollam to the Nabab's Naid (at Arcot) or Raja Beerbar, who in conjunction with Venkatapati Naid and the Bommaraju poligar reduced these nine pollams by the orders of the Nawab of Arcot due to the refractory conduct of the former poligar. The Eaegauvoory poligar was, at the same time, ejected for having assisted those poligars in their rebellion, and his pollam was attached, by the Nawab, to the Kalahasti Zamindar.⁸

By the end of the 19th century Kalahasti Zamindari was bounded by Nellore district in the north, Chengalput district in the east, Karvetinagar Zamindari in the south and Chandragiri taluk in the west. Then it possessed an area of 1151 square miles. According to the census of 1891 it had a population of 2,40,000.⁹

It consisted of two divisions viz; the northern and the southern. The northern division was called Pamoor division. It was bounded by Venkatagiri and Chundi Zamindars on the north, Kandukur and Kavali taluks of Nellore district in the east, Atmakur taluk of the same district in the south, and the range of hills separating the district of Cuddapah on the west. Its villages were scattered in five taluks of Nellore district: In Atmakur taluk 9

villages, in Kavali taluk 24, in Udayagiri 97, in Kandukur 7, and in Kanigiri 64 making a total of 201 villages and covering about 415 square miles with a population of about 1,00,000.¹⁰

The southern division consisted of two taluks namely Kalahasti and Kachchinadu (or Madarapaka). It was bounded on the north by Venkatagiri zamindari, on the east by a part of the same zamindari and a part of Chingleput district, on the south by Tiruvallur taluk of Chingleput district and the Narayanavanam division of Karvetinagar zamindari, and on the west by a chain of Yerpedu hills separating it from Cuddapah, Chendragiri taluk and Karvetinagar. The extent of this division was 736 square miles. Its population, according to the census of 1891 was 1,40,000 while the entire zamindari had a population of 2,40,000.¹¹ The Kalahasti taluk of the southern division of the zamindari was in Chittoor district, while Kachchinadu taluk was in Chingleput district.

Of the 612 villages in this Zamindari 285 were inam villages. These villages covered an area of 540,000 acres, of which, according to the census of 1891, only 300,000 acres were under cultivation and the rest was left uncultivated due to failure of monsoon.¹²

The entire Kalahasti zamindari consisted of three taluks namely Kalahasti, Kachchinadu and Pamuru. Each of these taluks comprised of several 'firkas' or 'Vontus' headed by a 'Vontudar'. In the Kalahasti taluk there were ten 'Vontus' namely Kasba-Kalahasti, Chembedu, Gajulapelluru, Kalatturu, Tondamanadu, Sanguru, Nalaballe, Yempedu, Matham and Kalivettu. In Kachchinadu taluk the eight 'Vontus' of Shamshadbahadurpeta, Nelavayi, Madarapaka, Vengalatturu, Tripurantikapuram, Peranduru, Chilamatturu, Madarapaka were there. The Pamuru taluk comprised of the nine 'Vontus' of Pamuru, Seetharamapuram, Lingasamudram, Narravada, Vinjamuru, Chandrasekharapuram, Darisagunta, Uttarakanduru, Dakshinakanduru. Each of these 'Vontus' consisted of several villages, the basic unit of administration.¹³

At the end of the nineteenth century this Zamindari was paying a peshcush of Rs. 1,74,000 and a road cess of Rs. 27,000 per year to the British Government, while its revenue was about Rs. 4,00,000.¹⁴ This peshcush was paid by the zamindars at the Chittoor Huzur office in three 'Kists' or instalments each year.

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II

RELATIONS OF KALAHASTI WITH THE INDIAN RULING DYNASTIES

The rulers of Kalahasti whose ancestors are traceable to as far as the 12th century A.D., were originally free lances.¹ They were however, known to be great soldiers. It appears that they also served as Kavalgars or superintendents of police during the Vijayanagar rulers. It was only at a later date that they became independent chieftains (called poligars or Rajas and after the permanent settlement as Zamindars) of small tracts.² Even in the 15th Century A.D. they preferred to be greater in material wealth to an independent position with small territories and therefore helped powerful ruling dynasties and acquired territories in coastal Andhra and in the northern Tamil regions.³ Their strength, therefore, lay in the prospects of a Raja concerned. Several Hindu dynasties took their military help for defending themselves against the incursions of the Muslim rulers. They were invited for this purpose by the Kakatiyas of Warangal, Gajapaties of Orissa, Narapaties of Vijayanagar (in Coastal Andhra), and Rayals of Vijayanagar (Hampi) with their capital then at Chandragiri (in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh).⁴ As the members of Damerla dynasty of Kalahasti proved successful in the wars, they were granted, by these rulers, several tracts of the country from near the present Karnool district to the Cape Comorin. The Damerlavaru finally acknowledged themselves to be feudatories of the Rayals of Vijayanagar.⁵ But they do not appear to have retained all the grants. With the fall of the Rayals of Vijayanagar dynasty the Kalahasti Chieftains lost a good deal of their possessions in the 16th century A.D.⁶ However, after seeing that the Mughal emperors of Delhi had been over running Southern India, they offered their help to the Mughals, secured their patronage as well as their Subedars at Golconda and the Nawabs at Arcot, and extended their territories.⁷ But during the 18th century there appears to be again many ups and downs in their

fortune.⁸ Later in the struggle between the British and the French they helped the former and protected their territories or interests for long. It is therefore, interesting to note that at every time or stage of political change the Kalahasti Rajas of the Damerla family assessed the situation in the country and established good relations with those who were in the ascendancy on the political ladder of India.

Kalahasti – Kakatiya Relations

The Rajas (chieftains) of Kalahasti appear to be Kshatriyas (Velamas or Nayinivars) and to have belonged to Yinagala gotra.⁹ Jabbi (Javi) Nayinivar or Jabbi Nayadu¹⁰ is said to have been the first man of note.¹¹ He is reported to have raided the seize of Warangal (under the Kakatiyas) by the Muslim rulers (Khiljis and Tugluqus) in the 12th century (1112 A.D.).¹² The next person of whom traditions speak was named Mada Nayadu.¹³ He was also an ally of Kakatiya Pratapa Rudra who reigned in the 14th century A.D. and who is said to have conquered Pandyadesa.¹⁴

Kalahasti - Gajapati Relations

The next person of importance in the Damerla family was Vallabha Nayadu. As an ally of the Gajapaties of Orissa he killed a 'vazir' and secured fame.¹⁵ In fact several members of the Damerla family helped the Gajapaties and acquired from them large tracts as grants. The next person of the Damerla family, Timma Nayadu was equally successful against the Muslims and obtained the Jagir of Devarakonda.¹⁶ Abba Nayadu added Valoor (Ellore) to it and thus ruled over both Devarakonda and Valoor.¹⁷ He had a brother, Annama Nayadu and a few descendants. Venkata Nayadu a descendant of the family killed Iradkhan of Sunkesala.¹⁸ Thus the Damerlavaru were successful, for some time, against the Muslim rulers. In 1480 the Raja of Orissa (Gajapaties) became tributary to the last but one sovereign of the Bahamani dynasty.¹⁹ The Bahamani Sultans even occupied Masulipatam and Guntur from the Rayals of Vijayanagar whose dominions extended from Madras to Krishna and who reigned from Chandragiri.²⁰

Kalahasti - Vijayanagar Relations

When the Gajapaties of Orissa began to be dismembered and as the Rayals of Vijayanagar were growing strong (as during

the reign of Krishnadevaraya) these chieftains had become feudatories of the latter. They helped the Rayals in many wars and obtained from them (as from the Gajapaties of Orissa) very extensive dominions from near Kurnool to the Cape Comorin.²¹ For example, when Sriranga Raya-I became the ruler of Vijayanagar kingdom at the beginning of the last quarter of the 16th century (i.e., a few years after the battle of Tallikota or Rakshasi - Tangadi fought between the Vijayanagar rulers and the Bahamani Sultans in 1565, in which the former was defeated) the Golconda Sultans again invaded his kingdom. At this time the Vijayanagar Raja sought the help of the then chieftain of the Damerla family, Venkatappa Nayadu (another member of the family and not the above said Venkatappa who helped the Gajapaties against the Muslims in the 15th century). Venkatappa fought valiently against the Muslims and got victory in the battle of Kandukur. In this battle he killed the Khaji and several generals of the Muslim army.²²

Sriranga Raya was so much pleased with this success that he gave him (Venkatappa) Kalahasti as a Jagir along with Wandiwash, Gingee etc.²³ Moreover, the Rayal conferred upon him many titles and allowed him to use certain flags etc., being insignia of royalty (thus secured royalty or became kings from that of chieftains of small tracts).²⁴

One of the successors of this Venkatappa was another Venkatappa Nayadu. He also fought against the Muslims, won the battle of Rapur and got from the Rayals Trichinopoly, Tanjore and other territories.²⁵ He was, however, killed by the Muslims in the battle of Samayavarm, near Trichinopoly.²⁶ Soon the Kutub Shahis of Golconda occupied the remaining part of the Vijayanagar empire, leaving the Rayals only the fort of Chandragiri and a few areas around and near it. Thus the power of the Rayals disappeared slowly after the battle of 1565. The next important person in the Damerla family was the epoch making Venkatappa Nayadu of the seventeenth century A.D. during whose reign the Britishers secured Madras (in 1639) from him with the formal approval of the Vijayanagar Raja, Venkatappa-III (1630-1641) then with his new capital at Chandragiri.²⁷

Kalahasti-Golconda Relations

With the discomfiture of the Rayals the Rajas of Kalahasti appear to have lost good deal of their possessions. But the Golconda Sultans appear to have given them back some provinces which had been conquered by them. Papers found in the temple of Kalahasti show that Golconda allowed the Kalahasti Raja, Akkappa Nayadu to rule over Kalahasti (from 1660 to 1680).²⁸ When the Golconda Kutub Shahi dynasty was terminated by the Mughal emperor, Aurangazeb (in 1680-81) Akkappa also soon waited upon the emperor Aurangazeb (in 1666 A.D.) and recovered many of the tracts which had been lost by the Damerlavaru and from 1677 to 1700 A.D. the Kalahasti Rajas wielded large powers (with the help of Aurangazeb).²⁹

Kalahasti - Mughal Relations

Seeing that the Rayals of Vijayanagar (now with Chandragiri as their capital) were losing ground, the Golconda rulers were unreliable and the Mughal emperors of Delhi had been over running Southern India the Kalahasti Rajas offered their help to the Mughals and secured their patronage.³⁰ In the battle (during war of succession) which was fought between Raja Jaswant Singh (on behalf of Dara, the eldest son of Shahjahan and brother of Aurangazeb) and Aurangazeb and Murad (the youngest son of Shahjahan) near Ujjain on the 6th Ramzan Hijra 1068 (in November 1657) the Kalahasti Rajas fought for Aurangazeb.³¹ Aurangazeb soon won the battle and became emperor of Delhi.³² For this help a 'sanad', under the seal of Aurangazeb (without date), was issued, conferring on Venkatapati Nayadu, the districts of Venkatagiri, Rapoor, Kalahasti, Tondamanad, Kusba of Nellore and his former possessions in the "district" of Wandiwash and promising, on his waiting on him, to present him in 'inam' 20,000 pagodas etc.³³ He also wrote (his son Sultan Mohammad wrote on behalf of Aurangazeb) to the Kalahasti Raja Akkappa, successor of Venkatapati, praisingly acknowledging the help of the Kalahasti Raja and soliciting his help in suppressing rebellions in the Carnatic and Bijapur stating "The victory won in the territory of Oojien (Ujjaini) has been assigned to your name, for which you have been exalted and esteemed". "We will send an army towards Carnatic, under one of our nobles. We have lately heard from the

petition of Govinda Row that you have written to your 'Vakeel' (agent) here (Delhi) about your faithfulness and loyalty in our service, for which we will be pleased to show you our greater favour and esteem. We trust you will persevere in the same loyal course, until the arrival of our victorious forces there, and thereby expect the result and rewards of your endeavours and services from us."³⁴ In the third year of Aurangazeb's reign another communication was sent to the Kalahasti Raja by Sahib Girani Sani, a son of Aurangazeb. Among other things it stated: "Towards Carnatic our victorious army has been despatched, with the help of Khaji Mohammed Husain and other officers with a view to putting down the rebellions in that country and punishing the rebellious people. It is therefore, necessary for you to show your fidelity on this occasion and thereby make yourselves hopeful of our rewards and favours. . . we depend on your bravery and experience in the order and control of the province of Carnatic". "By this means you may become distinguished among your equals, and be an object of our favours".³⁵ (The details of this expedition of the Mughal army is given in Elphinston's "India", p. 540). Having helped the Moghals in this expedition the Raja of Kalahasti Venkatapati, Damerla Kumara Akkappa Nayadu waited upon the emperor Aurangazeb in 1666 A.D. and recovered many tracts which had been lost by the Kalahasti Rajas and wielded large powers during his reign.³⁶

In 1688 Aurangazeb wrote (farman or order) to Akkappa Nayadu acknowledging the services of the Kalahasti Rajas in the past, promising further rewards and asking him to cooperate with Mu-Azam Khan and other Ameers who were sent against Bijapur. The Raja was also asked to assist Shah Beg Khan who was sent with an army to reinforce Kasi Mohammad Hashim in order to quiet the disturbances in his neighbourhood and to put down the Rayalu (at Chandragiri).³⁷ In 1693 Aurangazeb again wrote to Akkappa permitting him to visit the emperor.³⁸ On this occasion the Raja was promised a 'parwana' conferring on him the rank of a Mansabdar of 4000 'rout'.³⁹ In 1697 the emperor again favoured this chief with a 'parwana' conferring on him, in addition to the rank and Jagir, the 'Naubuth', the title of Bahadur, Martib, fringed 'Palaqueen' and the 'Mansub' (rank) of Hufth Hazaree. In it was also stated: "You and your descendants therefore being signified

with these honours should act according to our orders".⁴⁰ In 1699 Zulfikar Khan, the 'Vazir' of Aurangzeb wrote to this chief, on behalf of the latter, conferring on him the body-guard-Jagir of Tirupassore Pargana.⁴¹ In the same year a 'parwana' was also issued by Zulfikar Khan, raising the Raja's rank of 'Mansab' to 'Mansab of Punjhazari' and commander of 2000 'sawars'.⁴² In the year 1700 A.D. also Aurangzeb granted Akkappa some more 'Parganas'.⁴³ In the first quarter of the 18th century there appears to have been many ups and downs in the fortune of the Kalahasti Rajas.⁴⁴

Akkappa was succeeded by Damerla Venkatappa Nayadu. It was during his reign that Asaf Jah (who later became Nizam-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad or Golconda), the Mughal subadar of Deccan (with Golconda as capital) and successor of Zulfikar Khan, arrived at Arcot (1743). At this time Damerla Venkatappa Nayadu waited upon Asaf Jah and rendered him service. Asaf Jah was so pleased that he issued a 'parwan' confirming the Jagir of Kalahasti and granting its 'Fouzdari' revenue to Venkatappa Nayadu.⁴⁵ This 'parwana' also refers to the one granted by Zulfikar Khan. In the 36th year of the reign of Mohammad Shah, Asaf Jah also conferred 2000 'rout' and 1000 horse on Venkatapati, 500 'rout' and 200 horse on Kumara Venkatappa, 500 'rout' and 150 horse on Akkappa.⁴⁶

This Venkatappa Nayadu died without children and his nephew Damerla Kumara Venkatappa Nayadu (1745-1795) succeeded him in 1745 A.D. In 1746 two tracts of land consisting of (1) Lingasamudram and three other villages, and (2) Kommi and seven other villages (all, now, in Nellore district) were obtained by this chief from the then Mughal emperor Mohammad Shah.⁴⁷ Similarly, Anwar-ud-din Khan Bahadur, in the capacity of the Minister of Ahmad Shah issued a 'parwana' (in 1748) granting this chief several other tracts in the Udayagiri division (now in Nellore district), other tracts and honours.⁴⁸ As a result of the addition of several tracts to the territory of the Kalahasti Rajas (then called as Mansabdars) its revenue reached 1,11,70,140 'dhams' by 1748 A.D.⁴⁹ In the above year i.e., in the first year of the reign of Ahmad Shah Bahadur, the Mughal Nawab at Arcot Anwar-ud-Din also conferred a 'parwana' on Venkatappa Nayadu for collecting this revenue from Udayagiri etc.⁵⁰ On 5th February

1754 a letter was written to the then Kalahasti Raja, Damerla Kumara Pedda Venkatappa Nayadu by Nazif Khan, the Minister of Ahmad Shah. In this letter the Raja was informed of the granting of Daroor and other villages as a Jagir.⁵¹ He was also informed of the grant of Kanigiri and other villages as a Jagir in lieu of those held at Cumbum or Kambham (all these places are now in Nellore district).⁵²

As the Kalahasti Rajas had become allies of the Mughals from the time of Aurangzeb they also cooperated and accepted the orders of their Subadars (Governors) at Golconda like Asaf Jah (Nizam-ul-Mulk who, of course, established independent authority in 1745, recognising the nominal, authority of the Mughal emperor) and the Nawabs of Carnatic like Anwar-ud-Din, Mohammad Ali or Wallaja.

Anwar-ud-Din, who was the Nawab of Carnatic (with his capital at Arcot) in the 'Suba' of Deccan (under the subadarship of Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk, founder of the Nizams authority in Golconda or Hyderabad and his successors—Nasir Jung, Muzafar Jung, Salabat Jung etc., respectively) of the Mughal emperors of Delhi, infact, issued a 'parwana' on 1st Hijri 1177 i.e. in A.D. 1740's) conferring a Jagir (on Kumara Venkatappa) and the taluks of Kalahasti, Nirpauk, Palchoor, Polacoor (Pellakur) etc., (then under the Sirkar of Chandragiri) and fixing the yearly peshcush for the taluk of Seetaramapuram under the Sirkar of Oodgheer (Udayagiri) at 15,000 Arcot Rupees, and for the villages of Aravumla etc. at 15,000 Madras Pagodas (excluding inams etc).⁵³ This 'parwana' at the same time demanded military service from the Kalahasti Raja (to the Sirkar of the Nawab) as per the tenor of his Muchilka (agreement) written on the back of the 'parwana'.⁵⁴

Wallaja was so pleased with the acknowledgement of his authority by this chief that he again granted the Kalahasti Raja (in 1777 A.D.) several hill palayams (or taluks).⁵⁵ On 21st Rujub in Hijri 1190 Wallaja also conferred the taluks of Eagwaw, Pamunchawar, Alwar, the village of Mudoor under the taluk of Setwele (Sattivedu in Chittoor district or Chitvel in Cuddapah district), and the Saib Naid Pollam Modappa Naid Pollam, Lokachari Pollam and Tumbachari Pollam which were under the

hill poligars, and an yearly 'jumma' (revenue) of 10,000 pagodas on Kumara Venkatappa Naid for the pay and service of 1000 matchlock and pike peons.⁵⁶ Wallaja's 'inayatnama' dated 12th Zilhijjah Hijri 1292 shows the fixation of peshcush of the pollams at 5000 star pagodas in lieu of the service of 2000 peons required by a former 'parwana' and ordered the restoration of the Muroor pollam to its poligar.⁵⁷

It was during the above said Damerla Kumara Venkatappa Nayadu, also called Venkatapati (1745-1795) who was the Raja of Kalahasti for about half a century, that another new Chapter also began in the relations between Kalahasti Rajas and the British. He created an eventful period, at times acknowledging the suzerainty of the Mughal emperors through the Nawabs of Arcot and at other times defying it. Being a very shrewed chief he also tried the French, the Marathas, Hyder of Mysore and his own brother chiefs and found in them wanting in several respects to be his suzerain.⁵⁸ He eventually adhered to the British, whom he held till his death. He, thus consolidated the estate of Kalahasti and recovered tracts which had been lost by his predecessor. He sent forces in order to secure victory for Mohammad Ali (the ally of the British) during the Carnatic wars and also for the sake of the British during the Mysore wars. He was succeeded by Timma Nayadu (1795-1803). It was during his reign that the Kalahasti Rajas were brought under the British rule. The permanent settlement of the revenues of Kalahasti was made in 1802 and thus the feudatories became the aristocracy of the land, enjoying protection guaranteed by the British. Timma Nayadu was succeeded by Pedda Venkatappa (1803-1830), Chinna Venkatappa (1830-32) Timma Nayadu (1832), another Venkatappa (1834-81), Muthu Venkatappa, Timma Nayadu etc., Raja Damerla Kumara Venkata Ankama Nayadu was the last ruler of Kalahasti.⁵⁹

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III

ASPECTS OF THE BRITISH-KALAHASTI RELATIONS

An attempt is made here to present some of the aspects of the relations between the British and the feudatory Rajas of Kalahasti from 1639 to 1881 in general and in particular during the three Venkatappas belonging to the middle of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries respectively. The period of Timma Naidu who ruled Kalahasti from 1795 to 1803 is also fairly covered because it was during his period that the permanent settlement of the revenues of Kalahasti was made.

The founding of Madras in 1639 A.D. was an important step both in the making of the British empire and in establishing the British-Kalahasti relations. But both the 'factors' (British and the then Raja of Kalahasti, Damerla Venkatappa, also called Venkatapati or Venkatadri) were unconscious instruments of that great event in the modern history of the world i.e., the creation of the British empire.

Venkatapati, who was also the Lord General of Carnatic, Grand Vazir and brother-in-law of the Vijayanagar Emperor Venkata III (1630-41) (then with his capital at Chandragiri), after careful survey of the position and calculating the probabilities cast his lot with the British whom he found superior to the Dutch the French, the Portuguese and the natives in various capacities. The new relationship that the Raja established was in the traditional policy of his predecessors who established good relations and helped the Kakatiyas, Gajapatis, Narapatis and the Rayals of Vijayanagar. They also helped Aurangzeb during the War of Succession and secured victories for him in the battle fought near Ujjain.¹ The Damerlavaru were feudatories of the Vijayanagar emperors. At every time, they assessed the situation in the country and established relations with those who were in the ascendancy on the political ladder of India. It was the same policy that Venkatapati followed. He established good relations with the

British by his generous offer of the terms and the site of Fort St. George at Chennapatnam (Madras) in 1639. But he was not aware that he was preparing the way for the establishment of the British empire in India. With him commenced the epoch making British-Kalahasti relations.

Venkatappa was a man of common sense, though unaccompanied with a knowledge of foreign languages. He was a soldier and a statesman commanding foresight. In his time, the Dutch, the French and the English were trying to secure a firm footing in India. Their competition was keen. The chiefs in India like the Kalahasti Rajas had to contend against local Mohammadans and imperial Mughals. There used to be great rivalry among these Muslims themselves. "Whether local or imperial, Muslim rulers (then) were bigoted and revengeful. Their intolerance had rendered them unpopular and the people were expecting some deliverer from them".² The Portuguese and the other foreigners in India had settlements in various parts of India. All these foreigners had been found superior to the natives in various capacities. But their character and resources were not known to the people at that time. It became necessary to choose one of them and finally after a careful survey of the position and calculating the probabilities Vankatappa cast his lot with the British. He found the English in search of a port on the Coromandal coast, south of Armagon (now in Nellore district of A.P.). He offered them a site on which even now stands the fort St. George in Madras.

During the reign of Venkatapati the British were seriously in search of a good and safe settlement. The British established their first factory on the Coromandal coast in 1611 at Machilipatnam which was then under the jurisdiction of Bantam. They were later invited by Nellore merchants. They were on the verge of getting a grant in 1614 from Sriranga II, the Vijayanagar ruler, but the king suddenly died followed by a civil war which hindered the grant. But due to an agreement in Europe between the Dutch and the English the British settled at Pulicat (now in Nellore district of A.P. and south of Armagon), the Dutch centre. However, the British soon withdrew from this place due to quarrel with the Dutch. In 1628 they left Machilipatnam also for Armagon (now called Durgarajapatnam).³ But in 1632 they again moved to Masula on

the invitation of the Golconda officers, retaining Armagon where they rebuilt a fort also in 1634. In 1637 Mr. Day, the chief of Armagon and member of the Masula council searched for a site at Pondicherry, Kanimedu and later at Covelong. He finally met Ayyappa, younger brother and chief agent of Venkatapati of Kalahasti at Wandiwash, the headquarters of which was Poonamallee and after an agreement secured a "high plot" in Madraspatnam in 1639.⁴

There are several reasons for the British leaving Machilipatnam and Armagon. By this time i.e., 1639 the British at Masula were faced with the frequent problems of getting confirmation of their privileges at every change of the ruling dynasties. The Coromandal coast passed first from Vijayanagar to Golconda and then from Golconda to the Mughals. The Golconda officers were harassing the British. There was also no discipline among the British. There was a dispute over agentship between Ivy and Cogan. There was no money for maintaining their "house". The firing into Masula and killing of some people by Captain Weddel of the Curtenian Association created by Charles I also added to their sufferings. The conditions at Armagon were also not good. The local Naik (Nayak) was not only oppressing but was also found placing obstacles in the way of the English trade and business, under the influence of the Dutch. Moreover, there was hostility of the Dutch from nearby Pulicat, the main centre of Dutch trade and power on the coast. The English were also faced with scarcity of money for investments at Armagon for clearing their debts or to meet their expenses. They found it difficult to get even 10 'pagodas' for their expenses.

Unaware of all these problems that the British were facing, the Raja of Kalahasti, at this time, Damerla Venkatapati invited them to settle in his territory at the site where the present Fort St. George stands. It may not be incorrect to conclude that the visit of Damerla Ayyappa (Younger brother and agent of Venkatapati at Wandiwash) to Pulicat was made for this purpose. But this does not mean the first initiative was not taken by the English. Only on the initiative of Mr. Day, the English chief at Armagon that the Raja invited him to Chennapatnam site. Mr. Day was incharge of Armagon from 1634. He was strongly advocating on abandoning Armagon and settling down at a site south of it. He

was searching for a site through all means. It was during this period that he sent his agents to the Raja of Kalahasti and got invitation and finally the site of Chennapatnam. After getting approval of his plan from Thomas Ivy, the newly appointed chief of Masulipatnam in July 1639 Mr. Day went ahead with his plan, met the Naik of Poonamalle and later secured a farman from the Raja of Vijayanagar, then at Chandragiri. The site given to the English is the area now north of Mylapore in Madras city. It was a 'high plot of ground'. Mr. Day studied the Chennapatnam area well before getting the farman. It was a place where he could get painting (Kalankari cloth or cloth with painted designs) which were so much in demand at Bantam. It was also a place where he could get a great store of longcloth and morrees. Moreover, he could get these articles more than 15 per cent cheaper than at Armagon. Apart from all these factors the British were in need of a good and safe settlement, for in South-East Asia they were losing one station after another to the Dutch. There was also a civil war in England between king Charles I and the parliament and another in Vijayanagar empire. There were also invasions on the Coromandal coast.⁵

If the Kalahasti Raja Venkatappa wanted the English to settle in his dominions, the English wanted a site near Madraspatnam much more badly. Day in particular was frantic. It appears that the Raja or the Emperor of Vijayanagar, Venkata III wanted to import horses for his army from Persia on the English ships. The Raja might also have believed that the fort of the foreigners would be a heaven in troubled times. Moreover, he expected that his territory might flourish and grow rich by drawing merchants near to it. He also wanted to send his servants yearly on their ships to the Bay of Bengal to buy him hawks, apes, parrots and such other babies. He also had a special love for the English.⁶

It was also the anxiety of the Coromandal English servants to procure some station which could at once supply goods for the market of Bantam and shelter the 'factors' from native insolence and Dutch malignity that guided them to Madras. The goods here were abundant and of a superior quality. It was for this reason that the Madras site was selected by Day while he was member of the Council of Masulipatam. By this time this site was in the dominions of the Kalahasti Poligars, who possessed their territory

as far as Madras and Conjeevaram on the east and Wandiwash in the south. According to Bosewell, the author of Nellore District Manual, Mr. Gurava Naidu and Mr. Armugam Modiliar went and spoke to Damerla Chennappa Nayadu, the father of Venkatapati and obtained his consent to make over to the Company the land forming Chennakuppam (the place where Fort St. George stands). However it was only during the period of Venkatapati that an offer was made to Mr. Day to settle in his dominions. The offer was immediately accepted by Mr. Day. In 1639 an amicable arrangement was made with Venkatapati (also called Venkatappa or Venkatadri) By this the English were to be allowed a settlement near a small Coopam (Kuppam) or fishing village which later became Madraspatnam. It was necessary, however, to have a formal grant (farman or cowle) from the recognised sovereign who was then Venkata III, a descendant of the Vijayanagar Kings. Venkatadri was a tributary of the Rayal. Mr. Day visited the Rayal in his palace at Chandragiri. From this place the Rayal issued a sanad in 1639, granting permission to the English for building a fort on the small strip on the coast, the first ever possessed by the British in India. Mr. Day was however informed by Venkatapati, even before this grant was made, that the new English establishment was to be founded in the name of his father Chennappa. As a result the name Chennappapatnam or Chennapatnam continued to be universally applied to the town of Madras by the natives of South India. But during the period of Sriranga III it was named as Srirangarajapatnam but it did not gain popularity. So much importance was attached to securing this territory, that without waiting for instructions from the court of Directors in England, Mr. Day proceeded with great alacrity to the construction of a fortress (at the expense of the Company), which was a soon surrounded by the town, now north of Mylapore. He allowed the latter to retain its Indian appellation (Chennapatnam) but he named the former as Fort Saint George, after the traditional champion of England. The fort was built with a view to protect themselves from the danger of attack by the restless turbulent armies of the neighbourhood. The territory granted extended five miles along shore and one inland. During the reign of Sriranga III, the last Vijayanagar ruler, they obtained (in 1643) a grant conferring on them the privilege of exercising judicial authority over the inhabitants, an exemption from customs and a

moiety of the customs which should be paid by other traders. The town, although in some respects incommodiously situated, rapidly advanced in commerce and opulence; and in 1653 the station of Madras was raised by the Company to the rank of a presidency. It is said in the Vamsavali or the genealogy statement that in 1746 when La Bourdonnais, the French General took possession of Fort St. George he found among the records of the English the 'sunnud' written on gold leaf and issued by the Rayal, and the 'Dimmit' issued by the Raja of Kalahasti (to Mr. Day) for the erection of Fort St. George and took them away. It appears that what was known as Kuppam later became Madraspatnam and the area ceded to build a fort came to be known as Chennapatnam (north of Mylapore) later both getting the name of Chennapatnam in usage.⁷

The 17th century was a period of ascendancy in the British-Kalahasti relations with Kalahasti as an overlord and the British as an inamdar. But in the first quarter of the 18th century their appears to have been many ups and downs in the fortune of the Kalahasti Rajas, though there was no rupture of their relations with the English.

But with the accession of Damerla Kumara Venkatappa Nayadu in 1745 another new chapter began in the relations between the Kalahasti Rajas and the British. In 1753 the members of the Damerla family helped the English force in capturing and killing Mohammed Kamal near Tirupati who was a terror for some time in Nellore.⁸ In 1756 the Raja acknowledged the authority of Mohammed Ali, the protege of the British as Nawab of the Carnatic. When Kalahasti was attacked by the Marathas in 1758 the English defended it. In 1777 Wallaja granted him some hill palayams or taluks. He also wrote an 'enoyetnama' to the Raja regarding the exemption of 3 years' revenue of his territories.⁹ As he was loyal to the British the officers of the British army from Bengal also confirmed the above and informed him that as long as his troops would be garrisoned at out-stations the 'batta' allowance would be paid by the Sirkar.¹⁰ In 1781 the British officer Eyre Coote asked the Raja to join him with troops in order to meet the dangerous invasion of Carnatic by Hyder Ali and later by his son Tipu Sultan of Mysore. The Raja following the traditional policy of his predecessors agreed to it immediately. He also sent

the British 100 gunny bags of rice, sheep, fowl etc.¹¹ In 1783 the Raja played an important role in getting victory against Tipu Sultan and in recovering the fort of Chandragiri for the British. After this victory Venkatappa informed it to Macartney along with a 'nazar' of 11 pagodas.¹² Macartney and Wallaja showed great admiration for his services. Both of them in fact sent a 'Khillat', Macartney sent a Khillat of four piece through Koneri Row Vakeel as a mark of congratulation.¹³ On 11th June, 1790, the Raja was asked by the Nawab to send his best infantry to Colonel Kelly. On 10th July of the same year, the Raja was called upon to garrison Chandragiri with 200 warriors and to serve under the orders of Captain Massy. A few days later a treaty was concluded between Wallaja and the Governor of Madras by which it was decided that four out of the five parts of the revenue should be allotted for the expenses of war and 'Tanahs', in case any amount from the four parts of revenue being withheld or stopped for the expenses of war, the Company should have the liberty of appointing Darogas and Tahsildars.¹⁴ As per the treaty the Nawab accepted to pay 6,00,000 pagodas for the expenses of war.¹⁵ He also informed these details to Cornwallis and to the Raja of Kalahasti and ordered the latter to pay to the Company agent all the instalments due by him (the Raja) for the fasli year 1200 and take receipts from the agent. But if the Company interferes in other affairs and destroys the rights of their Government he should not allow them to do so.¹⁶ In April 1790 the Nawab wrote to the Raja that as the English were at war with Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore it was incumbent upon those who were under their protection to extend all help to them "in order that this war might terminate in favour of the English so that all might live in peace".¹⁷ The Raja was also asked to join Colonel Kelly who was at the head of the troops in Carnatic and afford him all possible aid.¹⁸ On 12th October the Governor of Madras asked him to order 50 'sawars' along with a 'Jamadar' to go to Madras on the promise that he (Governor) would pay 4 pagodas to each 'sowar' and 15 pagodas to a 'Jamadar'. Meanwhile, the nawab also asked the Raja to send "200 true confidential and brave sepoyes to the fort of Chandragiri"¹⁹ in order to guard it under the orders of the Commanding officer of the fort. The Raja obliged all the above orders and helped the British in all possible ways. At the same time he took into consideration the need of money to the British

for their wars and paid them in time all the peshcush due for the fasli year 1200. For this he received praise and a khillat with a promise that whomever he appoints, 200 pieces of muskets would be given to him.²⁰ The Raja's loyalty and service to the British was such that he got praise even from Lord Cornwallis as quoted below: "That as you are zealously engaged in obeying and manifesting loyalty to the renowned Government, the preservation of your dignity will be regarded by me in such a degree that your honour and credit will be increased in abundance in the public."²¹ His sincerity went to the extent of even sending through his two Hurkaras (peons), the war elephants of the British which escaped to his territory during the war. Raja Venkatappa Nayadu developed firm relations with the British and created an eventful period. He ruled Kalahasti for 50 years, at times acknowledging the suzerainty of the Mughal emperors through the Nawabs of Arcot and at other times defying it.²² He was a very shrewd chief. He tried the French, the Marathas, Hyder and his own brother chiefs and found in them wanting in several respects to be his suzerain.²³ He eventually adhered to the British whom he helped to the date of his death. He consolidated the estate of Kalahasti and recovered several tracts which had been lost. His son Timma Naidu was a good warrior. However, he created troubles to his father and only on the instructions from the Nawab and the British that he was granted an allowance by his father. Even at the time of his death Venkatappa Nayadu did not forget to instruct his son to maintain good relations with the British and their protege, the Nawab of Arcot. The following are the instructions the Raja left for his son Timma Naidu. "We were always faithful to Hazarat Nawab Wallaja. He treated us well, but his son treated us unfairly when the English came to our rescue. If you act faithfully to the English, they will help you also and you will be happy. If the Nawab troubles you for Nuzzers, you shall appeal to the British and they will be in your favour."²⁴ In his instructions he also referred to the debts due by the estate and advised his son to adhere to the English as they in his view had been "more just than the Nawabs".²⁵

Timma Naidu ruled for 9 years from 1795 to 1803. He was a terror to his neighbours. He, however, assisted the British. On the death of Tipu Sultan and the success of the British in occupying

Srirangapatnam, he sent a letter of congratulations to the British. With the close of the 18th century the glory of Kalahasti as a martial power appears to have ended. On the other hand the British (by this time) were also thinking of bringing all the feudal lords in Carnatic, including the Nawab, under their direct management. In tune with this policy the Governor of Madras, Lord Clive wrote to Timma Nayadu in October 1800 that George Stratton had been appointed as Collector of "Western" peshcush to settle the affairs and revenues of the Zamindars and that he should recall his Vakeels from Madras and carry on all matters, between him and the Company, through the Collector.²⁶ A proclamation dated 2nd August 1800 was also issued, on the same day, by the Governor stating that the Zamindars of Western Pollams should stop exercising independent power, should accept all the regulations of the British and should pay their peshcush to the Collector (Stratton) appointed for that purpose.²⁷ It was further stated that in order to "establish regular and permanent courts for the administration of justice, the security of person and the property, and for the punishment of crimes under limited and defined laws, to be executed by the sole power and authority of the British Government", the Zamindars were "required to refrain, in all time to come from the exercise of criminal jurisdiction and to submit all cases, which may hereafter occur involving life or limb to the exclusive cognizance of the Collector of Peshcush".²⁸ It was also stated that it was decided to institute an enquiry into the state of inter-Government, produce, resources, revenue, population, civil, military and personal establishments etc., of the Zamindaries. All the officers and Zamindars were asked to obey the orders, if not the offender would be subjected to the most serious displeasure of the British Government.²⁹ On 25th January, 1802 the Collector was called upon by the Board of Revenue to report "what has been the usual line of succession among the Chittoor Poligars....." and at any period a female had succeeded. Accordingly, the Collector reported that the Chittoor Poligars generally conformed to the law prescribed by the "Sastras" and that an elder son "was laid aside only owing to his natural imbecility, and the pollam devolved on his next brother" and that he found "on one instance of a female having succeeded in her own right".³⁰ He also enquired into the nature of the tenure on which the Kalahasti Rajas held their lands

and asked the Rajas to send their 'sanads' which, received by Stratton, showed the condition of their military service and the dignities conferred on them by which they were bound to attend the summons of the sarkar with a number of men.³¹

It was also in the time of Timma Nayadu that the British Government disbanded the military retainers in the service of the Kalahasti Rajas ("This irritated the chief and the irritation put an end to his life in 1803")³² "for establishing the regular administration of justice, the security of persons and property and the punishment of crimes, that the military establishments maintained according to usage by the Zamindars for the service of the state should be entirely abolished and discontinued for ever",³³ states the Governor Lord Clive's proclamation dated 24th August 1802. Since the Governor has resolved to relieve the Zamindars of "Western Pollams" (among which Kalahasti was one) from the burden and expense of supporting their military establishments it was also decided to commute their military services for a tribute to be paid in money, in addition to their established peshcush.³⁴ However, the Zamindars were to be relieved, after the first day of the fasli year 1212 (1802) from the obligations of furnishing troops for the service of Government, of maintaining forts or garrisons and of furnishing military stores or implements of war.³⁵ In consequence of the commutation the British took charge of protection and defence of the Zamindari against all enemies. They also took possession of fire-arms and weapons of offence and suppressed the use and exercise of arms and military weapons. In order that no person might be subjected to a loss of his personal property it was, however, proclaimed by the Governor that the Collector was authorised to pay the value of the weapons to the persons delivering them at the rate of Rs.10 per each musket, Rs.10 for each matchlock and Rs.10 for each pike.³⁶

The Zamindar was allowed to maintain 100 peons for his personal attendance as a mark of his pomp and splendour but their register was to be kept in the 'cutchery' (office) of the Collector.³⁷ The Zamindar was asked to obey the orders "in the assurance of enjoying with their families, tenants and ryots, under a system of defined and public law, every civil right together with the domestic usages and religious institutions of their ancestors".³⁸

The number of armed men maintained by the Kalahasti Zamindar was 5077³⁹ and the annual expense incurred by him in money and in lands for that purpose amounted to star pagodas 51150.⁴⁰ On relieving the Zamindar from his responsibility of providing protection to the territories under him the troops maintained by him were brought under the immediate pay and service of the British Government. The military services were commuted for an equivalent in money at Star-pagodas 49,225⁴¹ which included the revenue from salt (S.P. 55), Sayer (S.P. 5082) spirituous liquors (S.P. 465) also. Since the above articles were retained in the hands of the British, the Governor made a deduction of S.P. 5602⁴² and the future contribution of the Zamindar, with the addition of the former peshcush S.P. 10,775, was fixed at S.P. 54,398.⁴³ The Sunnud-i-Milkiat Istimrar or a deed of permanent property was also transmitted to the Zamindar, fixing the said sum of S.P. 54,398 to be the permanent contribution of the Zamindar. The Zamindar gave his assent to it on 2nd September, 1802. According to this he agreed to pay the seasonal amounts of 'Kistbuddy' as follows.⁴⁴

First Kist - 15th December	S.P. 18133
Second Kist - 15th March	S.P. 18133
Third Kist - 1st June	S.P. 18132
	<hr/>
	S.P. 54398
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Thus, by bringing the Zamindar of Kalahasti under the rules of permanent settlement of properties he was transferred from the class of feudatories to that of aristocracy of the land, enjoying protection of Government from all dangers, which was guaranteed to all its subjects in general. It seems an attempt was made by Timma Nayadu, along with the Zamindars of Venkatagiri and Sydapur, to revolt against the introduction of all these British laws but finally abandoned this attempt, probably after recollecting the fate of the Mysore rulers and the Southern Poligars.

After the death of Timma Nayadu in 1803 Kalahasti was ruled by Pedda Venkatappa Nayadu (1803-30), Chinna Venkatappa Nayadu (1830-32) and Timma Nayadu (1832) respectively. Timma

Nayadu died in 1832, appointing his widow to manage the estate and permitting her to adopt a son from among his relatives. She accordingly adopted Venkatappa Nayadu (in 1834) who was recognised by the British as an adopted son. He managed the estate for 47 years.

Venkatappa Nayadu was very loyal to the British. Even during the period of the so called Sepoy Mutiny (1857) he proved his loyalty by writing a letter to the then Governor of Madras, Robert Lord Harris and expressing his "feelings of deep regret at the barbarous massacre of helpless and feeble women and innocent children by the mutinous and treacherous sepoys and others of the North-West provinces in Bengal and Agra, who ungrateful for the protection and support afforded them by the English Government and regardless of the heavy retribution which awaited.....have heaped perdition upon their (sic) ads by betraying a Government renowned for its charity, justice and equity the rebels and traitors might.....in their anxiety to approach a burning flame, destroy themselves. The exertions which are being made in this country for the annihilation of the traitors, are very creditable. The protection, dignity, convenience, peace and comfort we meet with under the British Government, were things unknown during former Governments-I appreciate these benevolent acts of Government with the grateful feelings of a truly loyal subject. I am doing all that lies in my power to suppress the evil sports and rumours concocted by the disaffected and the wicked."⁴⁵

He managed the estate with so much of success and he was ever so loyal to the British Government that he was made on 1st January, 1876 a Companion of the Star of India by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.⁴⁶ However, the numerous laws introduced by the British much interfered with the collection of the revenues, that notwithstanding the excellence of his management he was compelled to borrow money even for the necessities of the estate. This added to the debts he had inherited.⁴⁷ Though the revenue had fallen, he never delayed in paying peshcush to the Government. Money had therefore to be borrowed mostly for payment of the instalments of peshcush. At the time of his death, he left lakhs of debt and a promissory note to the Government of India for Rs. 3000 to be inherited by his successor.⁴⁸

He left six sons with a will registered on 16th February 1881 in the office of the Sub-Registrar of Assurances at Kalahasti in which he recognised (as also by the British) his eldest son Muthu Venkatappa Nayadu as his successor and granted villages to his other sons. He also directed the successor to grant Rs. 20,000 a year to the latter and provide them houses, jewels and furniture.⁴⁹ He died on 22nd February, 1881 and with him ended another great period of Kalahasti-British relations, the other one having already ended with the demise of Venkatappa Nayadu (1745-1795) of the previous century. But the relations between them was never bitter, the Rajas always following a policy of compromise and conciliation.

Thus, unlike the ten poligars of "Chittoor Pollams" who revolted against the British,⁵⁰ the Kalahasti Rajas firmly maintained their good relations with the British even when they were faced with prestige and financial problems, which arose as a result of the British introduction of new laws and regulations (from the beginning of the 19th century) with respect to the system of revenue and establishment.⁵¹

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50. For details of the Revolt of the Poligars of Chittoor Pollams see: D. Subramanyam Reddy, *Anti-British Revolts.....*, Ph. D., thesis *op.cit*; *Aspects of the British Revenue Settlements and Revolt of the Poligars of Carnatic with special reference to Chittoor Pollams, 1803-05*, an Article published in *Itihas: Journal of A.P. State Archives*, Hyderabad, 1982, Vol. IX & X, pp. 59-86.
51. For details of the system of revenue and establishment in the Kalahasti Zamindari during 18th and early 19th centuries see: D. Subramanyam Reddy, *The System of Revenue.....*, in *Itihas*, *op.cit*; pp. 15-58, *The Actions and Attitudes.....*, in the proceedings of A.P.H.C., *op.cit*; pp. 115-138, *Anti-British Revolts*; Ph. D. Thesis, *op.cit*.

IV

PRE-BRITISH REVENUE SYSTEM

An attempt is made in this chapter to show the revenue system in the "Western Pollams" of the Carnatic in general and in particular in the Kalahasti Zamindari during eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the Hindu system of revenue administration there was no intermediate class of proprietors interposed between the sovereign and the subject.¹ The introduction of such a class was an innovation made by the Muslim rulers. It went by the name Krory or Collector of a crore of dams (Rs. 250,000) in consequence of the lands being divided into charges yielding that amount, and it was not till a late period of the Muslim government that the term Krory was suppressed by that of Zamindar.² It was the Muslim conquest that caused not only the system of intermediate landholders and of farmers and renters but also to the introduction of Persian names and terms to denote ideas connected with land tenures.³

The Zamindars of Andhra in general consisted of three classes: "first, the velamas of Telinga origin, who were driven from the Carnatic in 1652 by the Mohammadan arms and who established themselves on the borders of the Kistna. Second, the Rachawars of the race of the ancient sovereigns of Orissa who were also compelled by the Mohammadans to relinquish the Pollams (estates) of the Northern Circar, and retired to the height and woods, that formed the eastern frontier. Their possessions were principally situated to the north of the Godavary. Third, the Wooriars being petty chieftains of the military tribe, who after the overthrow of the empire of Orissa by Mohammadans, were enabled, from this local situation, to acquire an independent jurisdiction. Their possessions are chiefly situated in the high lands in the northern division of Chicacole. The Zamindars in the plains could boast of no higher extraction than being descended from the officers and revenue agents of the sovereigns of Orissa,

who were employed by the Mussalman conquerors, in the management of their new acquisitions and who appear to have first acquired lands and influence after the conquest of Aurangzeb and during the distracted administration of his children".⁴

The Zamindar in modern Indian usage means a landlord. Literally the word Zamindar means 'holder of land'. The Zamindari was a right belonging to a rural class other than and standing above the peasantry.⁵ The possessors of Zamindari rights were not possessors of a visible article of property, like any other, but of a title to a constant share in the product of society.⁶ The 'sanads' of the Zamindars of Kalahasti, who were originally poligars before the establishment of the British power, show the nature of the tenure on which they held their lands.⁷ They generally express the condition of military service and confer on the poligars particular dignities by which they were bound to attend the summons of the Sirkar with the number of men attached to their respective rank.

The Poligars of South India were of very various origin. Some of them were the descendants of ancient sovereigns or chiefs, holding the territories assigned to them on condition of paying tribute and rendering military services. Others were revenue officers of farmers of revenue employed by the Hindu and Muslim Governments, who had acquired power and influence and got recognition as Poligars, Heads of Villages ryots, kavalgars, talaries or watchmen who had collected round them armed bands and levied blackmail from the surrounding villages, and rendered military service to sovereigns during troublous times also got themselves recognised as poligars and later with the introduction of the Zamindari system they became Zamindars (or Rajas). We may note here that the Zamindars of Kalahasti were not descendants of ancient sovereigns. They served several sovereigns in various ways and took their origin from those capacities. Before the British established their power over Kalahasti in 1801, the Kalahasti Zamindars were called as poligars and only after the introduction of the permanent settlement they were called Zamindars. They were also often called as Rajas because as poligars they possessed more or less all the powers and paraphernalia of royalty.

For a proper understanding of the relations between Zamindars and ryots, it is necessary to glance at the state of the case before the permanent settlement was carried out in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ancient Hindu law recognised only two beneficial interests in land, viz. (1) that of the sovereign or his representative and (2) that of the cultivators holding the land either individually or as members of a joint family or a joint village community. Neither the sovereign nor the cultivators had unlimited proprietary right or full ownership. The sovereign's right consisted in his power to collect a share of the produce of the cultivated land, known by the name Melvaram in the southern districts of the Madras presidency. But this Melvaram was not 'rent' in the strict signification of the term. The share of the ryots of cultivators was known by the name Kudivaram. The ryots were those "cultivators who employ, superintend and assist the labourer and who are everywhere the farmers of the country, the creators and payers of the land revenue."⁸ The Melvaram and Kudivaram rights were thus the two principal independent interests in land, and all other interests were derived from, or were subordinate to, either the one or the other. The ryot or ulkudi or mirasidar was the receiver of Kudivaram, and he might cultivate the land himself or get it cultivated by tenants. The tenant put in by the ryot was called 'Porakudi' or stranger cultivator. In exceptional cases, the porakudi was permitted to acquire a beneficial interest in land and the status of an ul-porakudi, but this was not recognised as a part of the general common law of the country. But owing to absence of any settled authority, the ryots were grievously oppressed by the levy of illegal cesses. Though the "sist" or regular assessment was a fixed sum of money, the extra assessments were also collected. In most cases the extra assessments were purely arbitrary.⁹ In the Northern Circars of Andhra the ryots share which was originally not less than one-half was reduced to 1/4th or 1/5th by the additional imposts levied on various pretexts.¹⁰ The report of George Stratton (then Collector of Western peshcush) on the western pollams¹¹ (which include land of the Kalahasti Zamindars¹²) shows that, besides the mamool teerva which was in itself sufficiently onerous, imposts were also levied in the Kalahasti zamindari under the denomination of cutnams (Katnams) and that most of these were arbitrary exactions which

originated in the second half of the 18th century.¹³ Kalahasti zamindari is one of the examples in which the existence of the Kudivaram right in the ryot was denied.¹⁴

In fact, the ryots in the Zamindari tracts as well as the ryots who paid revenue direct to the Government in the Madras presidency were rack-rented and oppressed. During the nineteenth century, however, the latter class of ryots and slowly prospered in consequence of the measures adopted from time to time for the amelioration of their condition, while the former had remained in most parts of the country in much the same condition as before.¹⁵ The zamindari ryots formed nearly one-fourth of the total agricultural population of the Madras presidency.¹⁶

Having made brief survey of the origin of the zamindars (including poligars) and their rights the condition and rights of the cultivating class of Andhra, we may now consider the revenue system in the Western Pollams with special reference to the Kalahasti Zamindari (which comprised a large area¹⁷ of western pollams) and the incidence of abuse.

The main sources of revenue to the Kalahasti zamindari were: (1) Land revenue (2) Imposts and (3) Syer or customs.

The land revenue was levied in three different modes viz., (a) by Teerva or money assessment (b) by warum or share of produce and (c) by Jodee or quit rent.

All arable land belonging to every village had a Teerva of fixed money valuation sanctioned by mamool or custom of long observance. The mode observed in settling the Teerva was as follows. When a ryot was desirous to cultivate any tract of waste or jungle land, it was made over to him on 'cowle'¹⁸ or agreement for a term of years on the principle of 'russeed' or progressive increase. The Karanam or village registrar and the Reddy or head inhabitant had the power to fix the sum, in consultation with the Sirkar servants. This amount was to be paid annually, with every necessary consideration to the labour incident to clear the ground.¹⁹ At the expiration of the cowle (when the ground was supposed to be brought to the highest pitch of improvement by successive cultivation and the

application of manure) a fixed Teerva, in reference to the valuation of that kind of arable land under the village, was settled by the general concurrence of the Sirkar servants, the Karnam, the Reddy and some of the principal villagers.²⁰ This fixation was considered as Mamool Teerva even after and registered accordingly in the Karnams accounts.

This Teerva or valuation so regulated varied in every village and on every kind of land. And the rates in each village were well known to all its inhabitants. The Sirkar however rarely collected the revenue according to the registered Mamool Teerva. In some instances less than the Mamool Teerva was levied out of favour towards particular individuals. But the Teerva amount collected was generally heavy on all the lands. This resulted in the constant alteration between the Sirkar and the ryots. It therefore lead us to the consideration how far the Mamool Teerva had been settled on just and equitable principles.²¹ As the waste land was gradually brought under cultivation, the Mamool Teerva had been settled at different periods with reference to the actual value of arable land of the same description.²² From this we can conclude that exception to the Mamool Teerva were rare and not applied generally over the country.

If the ryot was asked to pay the Mamool Teerva alone he never complained, he paid all the amounts. But the tragedy was that the Sirkar generally exacted more than what the ryots had to pay. It is therefore necessary to explain by what means the ryot was enabled to pay the increased demand. This may be discussed under three points here.²³ Firstly, from the difference in the quantity of land he engaged to cultivate. This was possible because the land was measured at guess and due to this method the ryot generally managed to get more land than was stipulated in his engagement. Secondly, from the difference in the quality of the soil. As there was a particular rate of Teerva on each kind of land he managed to get the first sort for the assessment usual for the second and so on with the rest which, of course, yielded him a greater advantage. Thirdly, from the difference in the price of grain, for when the price was high he could pay his rent with some profit for himself, but if the price was low he lost all profit from grain. But generally he could not wait until the price rises. On the contrary he was either

obliged to sell the whole quantity early in the season to discharge the dues of the Sirkar or he had to mortgage his grain at an enormous interest for the purpose. This proved equally detrimental to his hopes. If the ryot had no opportunity of taking advantage from anyone of the above mentioned advantages he generally sold his "ploughs and effects" and absconded.

It is necessary to state by what means the ryot took advantage over the Sarkar by the difference in the quantity of land and quality of the soil above the terms stipulated. The village Karanam and the Reddy generally point out to the ryot the land he was to cultivate²⁴ and endeavour to bring him to adequate terms. The Karnams might settle with him without the concurrence of the Reddy but the Reddy was not competent to make any settlement without the Karnam. In general both the Karnam and the Reddy favoured the ryot because they derive advantages or profits from him. Although they make a show of protecting the Sirkar interest they invariably in the end sacrifice that interest as they largely participate in the profits of the ryots from these collusions.²⁵ This was the method by which the Teerva was levied on Punji (dry grain lands) and Nunji (wet grain lands) lands.

The Teerva as the name implies was paid in money. The coins that were generally in circulation in Kalahasti were Pulleput Pagodas, Star Pagodas, Madras Pagodas, Caverypauk Pagodas, Kirkee Pagodas, Arcot Rupees, Pondicherry Rupees, Soolaukee Rupees, Company Rupees, Aparanji Fanams, Chuckerry Fanams, Madras Piece.²⁷ But the first three were very common along with the Fanams and a small portion of copper coins. They had molyakaram or value at all places.²⁸

The second mode of collecting the land revenue was denoted by the term warum or warumpaloo implying share of the produce. This was regulated by two considerations viz (1) the caste and condition of mirasidars or persons having a preference or privilege to cultivate particular land and (2) by the labour used to the cultivation.

The caste which comes under the first consideration was the Brahmins. Due to prejudice of custom and religion these people never followed the plough and were therefore under the necessity of entertaining people to cultivate their land. In consideration of

this additional expense they were liable to, they were allowed a large proportion of the produce. Under this principle the pundits who ranked amount the first class of Brahmins got in 10 parts about the proportion of 6 and the Sirkar 4.²⁹ The higher castes of Rachawar, Reddies, Yelamawar and Kammawar who were much favoured by the Kalahasti zamindars also shared as pandits.³⁰ There were again peons (armed police) who from once having been in better circumstances were from shame also restrained from following the plough and equally with Brahmins entertained ryots for the purpose.³¹ They were therefore, in some instances, allowed a larger share of the produce. It must be understood that the proportions above stated were not exact in every instance over the region, some being more and some less.

The second consideration was with regard to labour of the ryots. According to this the ryots get a proportion of the produce equal to the labour required for the cultivation. If a ryot's land was under a tank which had the capacity of watering two crops³² annually or near a channel from a river³³ the poligars collected something more than half of the produce. If the ryot, however, had much trouble in watering the crops from tanks,³⁴ by water courses or by raising water from wells³⁵ for the purpose, he then got a larger share.³⁶ The warum, on all arable lands, was generally registered in the Karnams accounts in the same manner as Teerva. In Kalahasti the Punja lands of Cullavat and the Nunja lands of all other areas excepting Seetharampuram "district" the ryots preferred payments in kind and therefore both were accounted for by warum.

The last item of land revenue was the Jodee³⁷ or quit-rent. This was collected from the inamdars who enjoyed the whole produce of their inams with the reserve of a moderate fixed quit-rent payable annually either in money or grain as may be stipulated to the Sirkar. When this jodee or quit-rent was once fixed it ought not to be raised.³⁸ But the Kalahasti zamindars were in no way scrupulous about encroaching on the rights of their subjects.³⁹

As jodee related solely to inamdars and was levied with a few exceptions on all, it is necessary to notice the inams peculiar to this area. They were: Devadayams, Darmadayams Punnutu

Manyalu, Cheruvu maniyams or Dasabandams, Amarams and Kattubadis. Devadayams were lands assigned for the support of temples which when exempt from any quit-rent were denominated Serva Manyam. In South India every village however small had a pagoda (temple) of its own with some lands attached to it for the expenses incident to its establishment. In Kalahasti the devadayams and Brahmadayams or the lands assigned to the pagodas and Brahmins yielded a revenue of Star pagodas 16966-6, while all the categories of inams yielded a revenue of S.P. 32438-7.⁴⁰ Brahmadayam or charity lands comprised of two classes viz., Brahmadayam or lands enjoyed by Brahmins which, on favourable quit-rent, were denominated shortriums and the Kyrati or free alms to Muslims for the support of Mosques. The Pannutu Manyalu (Service gifts) were land enjoyed by village Karnams, Reddies and barabulloti or village artificers for their services. The Cheruvu Manyams were bestowed on any person who might have dug or repaired a tank at his own expense. They were intended to reimburse him gradually for his expense. They generally amounted to about 10 per cent on the whole produce of lands brought under cultivation by means of the tank in question. The fifth and sixth categories of inams namely the Amaram and Kattubadi inams which were enjoyed by the peons for their military and police services have been explained in the fifth chapter in connection with the payments. The Jodee paid by the Amaram and Kattubadi inamdars amounted to S.P. 2494-15 and S.P. 519-3 respectively.⁴¹

With regard to these inams we must note here that the poligars were at liberty to resume the Amaram and Kattubadi inams without assigning any reason to the several occupants. But they could not justly resume the rest⁴² (this point had been made perfectly clear by a decision of the Court of Sadar Adalat in 1817 and by the position taken up by the Government) without a sufficient reason such as profligacy of Character in Brahmins or neglect of duty in others. Therefore the reversionary right in the inams was in the zamindar.⁴³ In Kalahasti the Government never took into consideration the value of the assets of the estate in fixing the peshcush.⁴⁴

As regards the grain and land measurements,⁴⁵ they were on a uniform standard in all the "districts" of Kalahasti zamindari

with the exception of Seetarampuram. But the average value of land varied in each district under Kalahasti.⁴⁶

In order to collect the revenue the zamindars generally issued orders to the renters and amildars to pay a percentage of the revenue of the "district" under them. This percentage depended wholly on the exigencies of the moment. The orders for money and grain were issued till the whole of the revenue was collected without any regard to 'kist' or regular instalments. Sometimes these orders were issued even before the reaping of the harvest. In such case the renters and amildars endeavoured to procure an advance from the ryots. The ryots were therefore under the necessity of mortgaging their share of the expected produce, to a great disadvantage in order to satisfy these premature calls on the hard earnings of their industry.⁴⁷

In Kalahasti all the districts with the exception of a few villages were under rent. The Zamindar generally followed the policy keeping the rents small. They never allowed more than two villages to be rented by any man. By this system he could know the profits of all. To ascertain this matter he usually sent for the Anchandar's⁴⁸ appraisal of the crops. Then he compared the Karnam's accounts with the settlement between the renter and the ryots, and exacted from the renters all the advantages they might have derived above 50 pagodas.⁴⁹ But when on the contrary they happened to meet with loss they were invariably pressed and if unable to discharge the balance against them they were either consigned over to the 'sibbandi' or the balance stood in the poligar's accounts against them, and on their death fell on their heirs, for which all property they used formerly was liable to be attached.⁵⁰

It may naturally be inferred, considering this severity on the part of the zamindar, that no one could be induced to engage for any village in rent, but the reverse was the case. The renters did not consider the practice unjust expecting when they were deprived of their rent before expiration of their lease. Their principal temptations to this adventure as renters were firstly, the importance they for a time assumed in that character, and secondly, the advantage they derived by retaining all the best land of the village in their own hands. The fallow or other kinds of

lands were distributed by them among other ryots. It is true the Zamindar was aware of the advantage derived by the renters. But as a policy he never interfered, the Sirkar warum being his only concern.⁵¹

The second principal source of revenue was the imposts. Imposts may be discussed under the heads of (1) cutnum or 'tribute' (2) tax on castes and (3) Moturfa. The first item of the imposts, namely the "Cutnums" consisted of (1) Mamool cutnum or customary tribute and (ii) Ghair Mamool cutnum or extraordinary tribute which was generally demoninated puttee, literally signifying contrary to Mamool or custom.

(i) Mamool cutnums were fixed stated exactions from the people. They were levied on two different modes viz (a) on teerva, a stated sum imposed on every pagoda (coin) of Teerva which the ryot agrees to pay for the land he cultivated and (b) on warum a stated sum in like manner imposed on every candi of the ryots share of the crop which was valued at a fixed rate (ii) Ghair Mamool cutnum or puttee was an oppressive exaction on the inamdars and in some districts on the ryots in general.

Regular imposts levied by the Kalahasti zamindar above the rent consisted of (1) khass cutnum or zamindars own proper cutnum which was first imposed in the last quarter of the 18th century by the zamindar Venkatapati Nayadu⁵² at the rate of 2 per cent on the ryots share of the crop⁵³ and (2) Diwanee Tahreer, which was imposed at the rate of 1 per cent on the ryot's share of the crop for the benefit of the Diwan Balaji Pundit⁵⁴ at the beginning of the last quarter of the 18th century but collected even after 25 years. The revenue from the Khass and the Diwanee Tahreer by 1801 was S.P. 3280-4 and S.P. 1168-3 respectively.⁵⁵ The above two imposts were collected in every district of the Kalahasti Zamindari, excepting the northern pargana of Seetharampuram, where the produce was not accounted for by warum. Here also the same percentage was levied on Teerva. Apart from this a separate Mamool cutnum was collected in that district. This was also imposed (by Venkatapati Nayadu) on each village and it amounted to 3-15 annas per cent⁵⁶ on the land revenue of that district. As far as the Puttee is concerned it was levied only by the Zamindar of Venkatagiri on inamdars, while in

Kalahasti it proved more general and consequently as affecting the ryots more oppressive.⁵⁷ The puttee levied here (by 1801) on the ryots and inamdars was S.P. 12097-12.⁵⁸ The ryot was taxed at the rate of 8 annas on each Candy of his share of the produce and those of the superior castes of Yelamas and Kammas 6 annas.⁵⁹ Besides this the Zamindar exacted from all land holders, apart from their Jodee, one fourth of the gross produce of their inams.⁶⁰ But the ryots were exempted from any puttee. However, all the inamdars were subject to the same exaction of one-fourth of the produce of their inams above their Jodee. In Seetharampuram pargana, Puttee was hard on all classes of people. (1) Inamdars had to pay half the produce of their inams above the usual Jodee. (2) In case their lands were not cultivated by themselves or their own immediate dependents, but by common ryots those ryots were then like manner deprived half of their warum. (3) All ryots of this district were subject to a general tax of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the amount of Teerva they paid.⁶¹ This oppressive tax was first collected by Venkatapati Nayadu in the middle of the 18th century on every alternative year and occasionally once in three years. But the successor of Venkatapati Nayadu (Timma Nayadu), however, exacted the puttee every year with the utmost severity. Except in the year 1800 the puttee on inamdars and the ryots) continued to be collected for several years.⁶²

The ryot's warum in Kalahasti was valued at $5\frac{1}{2}$ Madras Pagodas a candy in order to levy the percentage of cutnum etc. The Zamindars grain accounts were, however, closed at 4 Madras Pagodas a candy at which rate all other transactions were settled between the Zamindar and his renters.⁶³

Under the head of Cutnums there was another item namely the Nuzzers or presents which yielded a revenue of S.P. 1574-1 in 1801. It was collected for the purchase of presents on the birth of the Kalahasti Zamindar's second son and for the purchase of a Palakeen and an elephant at different times.⁶⁴ Nuzzers were collected whenever there was a pretence. Refusal to pay the sum generally brought the Zamindar's displeasure. Nuzzers were also collected to defray the expenses of the Gold Howder and silver Plantain leaf⁶⁵ which the Zamindar had made up.

The Baza-Khurch of Kalahasti generally composed of several items of disbursements to which every village was subject. It consisted of Saderward, Batta to Sibbandi etc. But this abuse was not carried to the same extent as was found in the Venkatagiri Zamindari. It amounted to Madras Pagodas 4,292-15-7-16th or Madras Pagodas 3-10-8-16th per cent on the zamindaris gross revenue. Of this Madras Pagodas 2,673-311-16th was levied in Seetharampuram alone and its percentage reached 6 pagodas 4 annas on the gross revenue of that district.⁶⁶ Hence, the Baza-Khurch in that district was more in proportion to the rest.

Under the head of tax on castes (among the imposts) it was customary with the Kalahasti Zamindars to rent the privilege of taxing every house-keeper of particular castes. This tax paid by the peasants amounted from one to three fanams yearly. The renters of this tax were selected from the same castes, and they were given the power of levying fines, for trespasses, on any individual of a particular caste under them. If these fines exceeded a stated sum, which varies from one rupee to one pagoda, they went to the Zamindar, but otherwise were the profits of the renter. The castes so taxed consisted of washermen, barbers, potters, blacksmith, shepherds, labourers etc. This practice of taxing castes was first introduced with a view to settle caste disputes. The plan observed by all the renters in regard to the tax paid by every housekeeper within their jurisdiction was to compromise with them generally on a fair estimation. This amount was afterwards distributed among themselves. But with regard to fines for trespasses it was very different. No family was safe from the reports of invidious informers whom the renters employ to foment private enmities and jealousies to induce complaints by which their profits from fines under the pretence of administering justice were greatly enhanced.⁶⁷

Under the head of Moturfa (the third item among the imposts) three kinds of taxes were collected. Firstly, the Akbari or tax on intoxicating drugs and spirituous liquors. The licence to sell these things was rented to particular individuals. In 1801 it yielded a revenue of S.P. 465-4.⁶⁸ Secondly, the tax on trades, such as weavers who paid a stated sum on each loom, the oil-mongers who paid an amount for each oil mill etc. This was

levied in proportion to their gains. It also varied in every village. The collection of these taxes was also in some instances under rent. The third item under Moturfa was the ground rent. This was levied on each house and was regulated by the caste and condition of the person inhabiting it. It also consisted of the rent of coconut, mango and tamarind groves, as also the rent of fish produce from tanks etc.

The third principal source of revenue by name the syr collections or customs, which yielded a revenue of S.P. 5082-0,⁶⁹ were levied on three principles viz., (1) Teerva (here implying rates of customs), (2) Kavali or police expenses and (3) Russooms or fees in money.

The Syr Teerva or rates of customs as originally imposed were of very ancient date. The privilege of collecting them was generally rented. The rates were invariably raised at the numerous Mandeas established through these districts. It, therefore, had operated to the serious detriment of all internal trade.

In addition to the customs, the Kavali fees were also levied to defray the expense of maintaining the Kavalgars (or police) on the roads for the protection of merchants. This collection was made only at custom chokies near the passes and certain places. These fees, however, proved oppressive exactions from the trader. In case the Kavalgars were not maintained for the purpose the amount derived from these fees were used for the exclusive benefit of the Zamindars or renters.

The Russooms or money fees were collected for various purposes.⁷⁰ They were used for the expenses of churches, for the support of choultries, etc. These were imposed by a percentage on the original rates of Syr Teerva. When the customs were under rent both russooms and Kavali fees were frequently included in the rent for stated distinct sums, which the renters either paid away for the purposes intended or the zamindars received the amount and defrayed the respective establishments.

In Kalahasti the total breez, inclusive of inams (S.P. 32,438-7), from its 854 villages was Star Pagodas 1,79,094-1 annas in 1801. The grand total of collections (excepting inams) amounted to S.P. 1,46,655-10 annas. Of this the regular collections, extra

collections, collections from Amaram and Kattubadi inams, and the extra collections by individuals consisted of S.P. 1,15,377-12, S.P. 13,673-10, S.P. 11,299-3 and S.P. 6,305-8 respectively. While the gross revenue from the first two items was S.P. 1,29,050-13, the total actual resources from the first three items of revenue was S.P. 1,40,350-1 and with the addition of the fourth item the grand total, as said above, amounted to S.P. 1,46,655-10 annas.⁷¹ Thus the Zamindars in India not only controlled the surplus and appropriated a part of it but also controlled the rural life.⁷² In other words this was nothing but a feudal system (1) in which the major source of production was agricultural, (2) in which a substantial share of the surplus produce was appropriated by a class which held power and military, (3) in which the economic power of the class which appropriated surplus was based on the military strength of that class and on the role that class was playing in the production process, whether of agricultural production or the subsidiary handicrafts production, and (4) in which dominating class was by and large a fairly closed group. It proves therefore that there was very little chance of this class being overthrown by those who were actually cultivating or engaged in the process of cultivation because it was socially, politically and militarily dominant. On the other hand the revolts against the imperial government are dominated by this class while this class was dependent on the emperor or the king for its position in many ways, the imperial system itself was dependent on the support of this particular class.⁷³

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2. *Fifth Report*, vol.II, 1812, p.7, Sundararaja Iyengar, p.10.
3. Sundararaja Iyengar, p. 106.
4. *Fifth Report*, Vol.II, p.5.
5. In 1769 on the establishment of British East India Company the management of the Northern Circars, the Zamindaries were described by the presidency of Fort St. George as "*lands he be certain Rajas or chiefs as their hereditary estates, paying a certain tribute to the government and being subject to suit and service, in a manner very similar to the ancient feudal tenures*" (*General letter from Fort St. George, 8th March 1769* cited in the *Fifth Report*, p.7).
6. Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian system of Mughal India (1556-170)* 1963, p. 159.

7. The Sanads of the Zamindars of Kalahasti show the nature of tenure on which they hold their respective lands. Some of the sanads generally express the condition of military service others confer on them particular dignities by which they are bound to attend the summons of the Sirkar with the number of men attached to their respective rank. The Sanads acquired Mr. Stratton, the first collector of North Arcot give us some details on various aspects (for details see: *Stratton letter with 13 sanads enclosed to the Board of Revenue, 19th July 1802*).
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid*, p. 222.
10. *Ibid.*
11. At the time when the British brought these pollams under their control in 1801 the Poligars (later Zamindars) of these pollams "had exercised an independent jurisdiction and power, wholly incompatible with relative situation as dependents of a regular Government; yet being more under its eye and control than those of the south, they were less disobedient to its authority. When the instructions were issued to Mr. Stratton, respecting the pollams they appear to have been in full possession of them; nor did any circumstances occur, to render the removal of any of them necessary". The British, therefore, settled the peshcush of the poligars on permanent principles and introduced the same internal arrangements which were adopted in the southern pollams (Fifth Report, p.103).
12. Diwan *op.cit*; pp.1, 2, 14, 16 and 19, J. Hodgson, *Secretary of the Special Commission, to the Collector of Western Peshcush 25th August, 1802, Kumara Timmappa Naid's (Zamindar of Kalahasti) Kabuliat or Instrument of Assent and Agreement to the Sunnud-i-Milkiyat Istimrar (24-8-1802) or Deed of Permanent property granted to him by the Right Honourable the Governor in Council of Fort Saint George, 2nd September, 1802.*
13. S. Srinivas Raghavaiyangar, *op. cit*; p.222.
14. *Ibid*; p.223.
15. S. Srinivas Raghavaiyangar, *Memorandum on the progress of the Madras Presidency during the last Forty years of British Administration, 1893, Madras*, p. 218.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Stratton's Report to the Board of Revenue, 14th July 1801, Putragunta Guruswamayya, Sri Kalahasti*, pp. 4 and 5. Also see Chapter I in this book.
18. It means "A writing of assurance, agreement or engagement as granted by Government to the Cultivator of the soil". "An agreement between a landlord and a ryot who tills the land of the lord that he (ryot) would pay the amount or give the share of the produce as accepted at the time of agreement". (D. Subramanyam Reddy. *Aspects of the British Revenue Settlements and Revolt of the Poligars of Carnatic with Special reference to Chittoor Pollams 1803-05, op.cit*;
19. *George Stratton's Report on the Western pollams to the Board of Revenue, July 14, 1801, op.cit.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. "Until the time of the Vijayanagara rule, village lands were owned by the village community which were subject to periodical redistribution among the cultivators based on the custom that no one should have a monopoly of the fertile lands. That the village was a settlement of peasants and the village assembly, an association of landlords, which redistributed their lands periodically, is evidenced from inscriptions. There is evidence of individual proprietors' p of land along with communal ownership in certain areas. Alienation by sale or gift was done with the consent of the community. The custom of redistribution, however continued to be the recognised form of land relations in the village community throughout the Kakatiya (1000-1323 AD), the Reddy (1324-1424 AD) and the Vijayanagar 1336-1565 AD) rule, and down to the beginning of the nineteenth century in the Telugu districts". (M. Pattabhirama Reddy, *The Agrarian System in Andhra Pradesh 1757-1857*, vol.I (Unpublished project work submitted to the I.C.H.R.) Kavali, 1978, pp. 11-12.

25. *Stratton's Report on Western Pollams, July 14, 1801, op.cit.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. Board of Revenue (Madras) to Governor in Council, Lord Clive of Fort St. George (Madras), dated 7th December 1801, in *Revenue Consultations, Madras*, Vol.112, pp. 2691-93, 2697-99, 2702-10, Minute of the Board of Revenue, dated 11th December 1801, *Revenue Consultations*, vol. 112, p. 2712, John Chamier (Chief Secretary to Government of Fort St. George) to Board of Revenue, 12th December 1801, *Revenue Consultations*, Vol. 112, pp. 2712-13, John Chamier to Benjamin Rockbuck, Assay master, Fort St. George, 12th December 1801, *Revenue Consultations*, vol. 112, p. 2725, John Chamier to William Jones Mint Master, Fort St. George, 12th December 1801, *Revenue Consultations*, vol. 112, p. 2726, Johan Chamier to John Read, Collector of Masulipatam, 12th December 1801, *Revenue consultations*, Vol.112, p.2729, William Johnes (Mint Master and Sub-Treasurer to Chief Secretary) to Government of Fort St. George, 13th November 1802, *Revenue Consultations* Vol. 121, pp. 4624-33, J. Hodgson (Secretary) to Government of Fort St. George, 20th November 1802, *Revenue Consultations*, vol. 121, pp. 4665-66, *Report of the Committee of Finance, dated 26th March 1800*, in *Public Sundries*, vol, 140, p. 692, *Public Consultations, 14th September 1798, Report of the Committee of Finance, dated 1807*, *Public Sundries* vol. 141, all in Tamil Nadu Archives, Madras.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. The crops usually raised in the Kalahasti Zamindari were paddy, sugarcane, groundnut, sajjá or holcus *platus*, jonna or maize, ragi or natcherry, sesamum, green gram or pulse, red gram, black gram, indigo, castor oil seed crop and Korra. The "Tamalapaku" leaves were planted in Aradalamitta, Puttur, Vurandur, Guntakindapalli Pallam, Akkurti, Pallamala and Kothapalyam of Kalahasti Taluk, Perandur or Katchchinadu taluk and Vinjamur of Pamur taluk (for details regarding the seasons for raising and harvesting a particular crop in this Zamindari see the reference given at the end of this reference). The lands on which the above crop planted were in general of red soil comprising mostly of sand and stones. Only the land under swarnamukhi and Talleru rivers and in the southern region of Kachchinadu taluk were fertile lands, because of the availability of water for raising crops (Putragunta Guruswamayya, *op.cit*; pp. 5, 9, & 10).
33. In the Kalahasti Zamindari Swarnamukhi, Kallanginadi and Arunanaddi (Narayanavanameru) were the chief rivers. Apart from these rivers there were other rivers in the zamindari namely Ralleru, Goddaru and Valagalamanda (For more details regarding the birth, course, length etc., of these rivers see: Putragunta Guruswamayya, *op.cit*; pp. 8-9)
34. The source of water for raising or watering crops in this zamindari were mainly the tanks. There were only a few larger tanks in this zamindari and all others were small and useless as a result of which the cropping covered only a few acres. According to the census of 1891 only 300,000 acres out of 540,000 acres of cultivable land was cultivated in the Kalahasti Zamindari due to lack of water in most of the tanks and failure of monsoon. The tanks of Tondamanadu, Chembedu, Kasaram, Peddakannali, Akkurti, Punabaka, Vuranduru, Palachchuru, Gajulapennaluru, Manganellore of Kalahasti taluk and the tanks of Seetharampuram, Kommi, Lingasamudram, Pamuru of the Pamur taluk were of large size in the Zamindari (*ibid*, pp. 5 and 9).
35. Except in the southern part of the Madarapaka area of the Zamindari the tanks in all other parts of the Kalahasti Zamindari were very few (*ibid*; p.5).
36. *George Stratton's Report on the Western Pollams to the Board of Revenue, July 14, 1801.*
37. This word has been entered in the manuscript as Joree and being apparently a mistake in the copying has been corrected in the above report while printing.
38. B.S. Baliga, *Studies in Madras Administration*, vol.I, 1960, Madras, p. 136.
39. *Stratton to the Board of Revenue, 14th July 1801, op. cit.*
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Decrees of the Sadar Adalat, 1805-1826*, pp.179 to 186.
43. B.S. Baliga, *op.cit*; p. 140.
44. *Ibid.* p. 141.

45. In the Kalahasti Zamindari the grain and land measurements were as follows:

Grain Measurement: in the Zamindari except in Seetharampuram

1 Madras Pagoda in weight	: 1 Pullam
1 7 ¹ / ₂ Pullam	** : 1 Sola
2 Sola	** : 1 Towa
2 Towa	** : 1 Addah
2 Addah	** : 1 Muntha or Mana
4 Muntas	** : 1 Kuncha
4 Kuncha	** : 1 Toomu
20 Toomus	** : 1 Candi

In Setharampuram.

9 Madras Pagodas in weight	: 1 Pullam
8 Pullams	: 1 Kuncha Seer
9 Kuncha Seer	: 1 Munta or Mane
6 Muntas	: 1 Toomu
20 Toomus	: 1 Candi

Land Measurement : In the Zamindari Exemption in Seetharampuram

72 Men's square feet	** : 1 Gunta
40 Guntas	** : 1 Ghurru

In Seetharampuram

74 Men's Sq.feet	: 1 Gunta
50 Guntas	: 1 Gharru

(Stratton to the Board of Revenue, 14th July 1801.)

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*

48. "Anchanadars are persons employed in revenue to estimate the quantity of a field of grain, anout the time when it is nearly fit for cutting on which estimate the amount of revenue is frequently calculated". (William Brown, *A Vocabulary of Gentoo and English*, Madras 1818, Kothapalli Subba Ramayya Second edition, 1958, cited by Bangorey in C.P. Brown's *Tatacharla Kathalu* (Telugu) Seshachalam & Com., Madras 1974, p. 103). The Anchandar's anchanas (estimates) were of two types: (1) Niluvu Anchana meaning estimate of the produce of a field before the crop is cut (2) Kuppa Anchana, meaning estimate of the produce of a field after the crop is gathered but before it is measured (H.H. Wilson, *Glossary of Judicial and revenue Terms*, London, 1855, cited by Bangorey, p. 103). The revenue officials in those days had to send the estimate of every field of crop before it was cut to the authority. The "anchana lists should be submitted. Even if a single mistake should arise in the estimate of probable yield or in harvesting operations, you (anchandar) will be personally held responsible" *Hukumnamas (1801-2) and papers relating to Sriharikota Yanadis (1846-1882): Selections from the records of the Nellore Collectorate*, Nellore, 1919, p.6). In those days the ryots especially in the Zamindari tracts should not cut their crop until the anchandar made an estimate of it, even if they had cut the crop on his approval, the ryot had to apportion the crop between him and government only in his presence.

49. *Stratton to the Board of Revenue, 14th July 1801.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*
52. For Damerla Kumara Venkatapati or Venkatappa Naid see: Chapter II in this book.
53. *Stratton to the Board of Revenue, 14th July, 1801.*
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*
69. *Ibid.*
70. We find there is a difference between the russooms or money fees collected by the Zamindars in the western pollams (including Kalahasti) and in the Nizam's dominions. In the latter there were three kinds of russooms namely zamindari russooms, Mannavari Russooms and Baanunugoyi russooms. The first one for paying those who were employed for collecting taxes, the second for police who protected villages and the last for those who used to give advice in the Khaanoon (court) were collected in the Nizam's dominions. But in the case of Kalahasti the russooms were collected only for the purpose of maintaining temples and choultries (Suravaramu Pratap Reddy, *Nizamurashtra paripaalanamu* (Telugu), Golkonda Mudraksharasla, Hyderabad, Vaisakhamu, Saa, Sa.(era).
71. *Stratton to the Board of Revenue, 14 July 1801.*
72. Saiyid Nurul Hasan, *Thoughts on Agrarian Relations in Mughal India*, 1973, p.1.
73. *Ibid.*

V

SYSTEM OF PAYMENTS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT

The Western pollams consisted of four pollams or Zamindaries. They were Venkatagiri, Sydapur, Kalahasti and Karvetinagar Zamindaries. Two of them namely Kalahasti and Karvetinagar or Bommaraju were in the district of North Arcot (in Madras Presidency) which included apart from other areas, a greater part of the present Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

The western Zamindaries of Kalahasti and Karvetinagar, as also the other two, first became subject to the British Government under a treaty concluded in 1792 with the Nawab of Carnatic (or Arcot). By this treaty they ceased to own allegiance to the Nawab and came under the British, subject to the payment of the same amount of peshcush as had been paid to the Nawab and also to the maintenance of certain military establishments. This latter condition was attached to the tenure of their zamindari under Muslim Government. In 1800 on general consideration, but more emergently to curb licence and to place it out of their power to employ their military establishments in levying war amongst each other as they had been found to do, it was resolved to relieve these zamindaries from the principal condition of their tenure and to commute every military service for an equivalent in money. With this view the Collector of Western Peshcush was asked to report on the general fiscal resources of the zamindaries and on their establishments. George Stratton, the Collector of "Western Peshcush and North Arcot" accordingly reported not only on the fixed resources but also on the military and revenue establishments and their emoluments and at the same time remarked "both are more expensive and on a larger scale than necessary, the military establishments no less formidable than unnecessary."¹

The military establishment in both these zamindaries (pollams) consisted of the Amaram, Kattubadi and Mercinary

peons. The Amaram peons belonged to the high order. The Kattubadi peons belonged to the lower order. And the Mercenary belonged the vagrants, Muslims and idle oppressive villains. These peons were similar to the military force of the zamindars of the Northern Circars of Andhra whose force also consisted of three varieties namely, (a) the manovarty peons who were military tenants of a high order and who were bound to bring their adherents to the field, (b) the Mocassa peons who were paid by the grant of lands subject to a quit rent only and (c) the common peons who were paid in money and who were expected to be in constant attendance.² In the same way the military (and the civil) establishment of the Kalahasti poligars was paid in three modes i.e., (a) by assignment of land, (b) in money, and (c) in grain.³ The first mode was however peculiar only to part of their military establishment and this can be discussed under two distinct tenures namely Amaram and Kattubadi tenures. The second and the third modes were generally observed in the case of the mercenary peons and in some instances in the case of the Amaram and Kattubadi peons also.

Under Amaram tenure whole villages were made over to the peons in the proportion of 8 or 10 to each village. They were then considered as the mirasidars of the village.⁴ They were jointly responsible for the rent originally stipulated. These peons generally encourage the ryots under them by giving the "just" share of the produce they were by custom entitled to because the ryots might "desert their villages and resort to others where their rights were better respected".⁵ The peons generally select those villages which were in a state of ruin and decay for they could enjoy them for two or three years without any tax, beyond the original demand or rent stipulated. But if the tanks etc., were repaired, water courses opened and the cultivation in proportion increased, they were gradually asked to pay the cutnums or nuzzers (presents). They were compelled to pay these presents under threats of ejection from their villages though under the original grant they were allowed favourable terms.⁶

These villages were divided into equal allotments depending upon the number of peons in each. These were redistributed annually by mixing "good, bad and indifferent land" in each lot so that the profits of all may be nearly equal.⁷ On these allotments

much alteration and jealousy ensued. The differences of the peons in these allotments were sometimes settled by the interference of the zamindars. But they were generally settled by the Karnams and head inhabitants of the adjoining villages who were called in to adjust them by arbitration. In some villages the allotments were made less frequently, in others the first allotment made on the original grant were never changed, each man binding himself to rest satisfied with the spot assigned to him for cultivation.⁸

If any share falls vacant by death or otherwise, the son of the former occupant succeeds by just registering his name at the Huzoor Cutcherry and by the Karnam of the village. If he happened to be an infant his share was cultivated by his relatives during his minority. In case there was no son, the next male heir or relative waits on the Zamindar and obtains a Sunnud without which he could not succeed to the inheritance. When there was no male heir the land reverts to the Zamindar. But, if it was enjoyed by a family for several generations a portion of it was sometimes given, to the nearest surviving female relative, in inam, which also on her death reverts to the Zamindar.⁹

The principal obligations under the Amaram tenure were however, not exacted by any Muchelka (agreement). But their names were registered at the Huzoor Cutcherry and the rent they were bound to pay for their respective villages was fixed.

The Amaram peons were required to attend the Zamindar on his summons. If they neglected or delayed in complying with it they were punished by dispossessing from their lands or by any other method as suits the Zamindar's pleasure. The Amaram Peons being of the higher class were allowed to serve with such arms as they prefer. In case a peon from sickness, minority, or other cause could not attend he must provide an efficient man to serve in his place.¹⁰ While in attendance on the zamindar each of the peons was entitled to a Saer of rice and any piece of batta daily. The same rate of batta was also paid to them if they were sent on any duty unconnected with the concerns of their villages. Their primary duty was to watch the police within their respective limits and in case of any irregularity or thefts in their range they were bound to answer to the complaint and to make good the amount of all stolen effects.¹¹

The other mode that the poligars observed in paying their peons was by assignments of land termed Kattubadi inams, implying gifts to "bind" or gift for their loyalty. The Kattubadi peons were all ryots to whom spots of jungle and waste lands were assigned for cultivation in lieu of a stipulated money payment the proportion of which in the Zamindari was as follows.¹²

In Kalahasti the Kattubadi Kyejeetumwandu or Pike peons of the Yelama, Kamma and Rachawar castes were given one Ghurru of Punja and 30 Guntas of Nunja of waste arable land. The Kattubadi Welogoolu or Matchlock peons of the Golla, Palli, Boya and Mala castes who were considered inferior to those above mentioned were given only half a Ghurru of Punja and 20 Guntas of Nunja. In case jungle land was assigned to the Kattubadi peons their allotments were then made to bear a just proportion to those of waste arable land above mentioned. As far as the measurement of these allotments is concerned 40 Guntas were generally considered equivalent to a Ghurru and 76 square feet to a Gunta.¹³

The Kattubadi peons generally received from the poligars an advance of Takkavi during the first two or three years on condition of repayment. If they were unable to repay it they were forced to take loans from private individuals. For this they give a share of their produce to such persons. On the other hand if their lands proved productive the Zamindars generally exacted from them annual Cutnums or presents which were paid in installments. This might be considered as the rent of their lands. The amount first levied was considered mamool cutnums or customary presents and this was collected ever after.

The mamool cutnum was not however the only exaction to which the peons were subject. If the peons, in the course of time, increased their produce, the Zamindars quickly exacted from them an additional 'cutnum' more or less equal to their grains. In case the peons refused to pay the amount imposed they were dispossessed and other spots of waste and jungle land was assigned to them for cultivation. Under this severe threat they, in general, agreed to pay the amount of Cutnums imposed, provided it was not exorbitantly oppressive.¹⁴ Apart from the mamool cutnums, Ghair mamool cutnums or extraordinary

presents were also levied on them, every three or four years, on any particular occasion such as the Zamindar's marriage or the marriage of any of his relations, the conservation of a temple etc.¹⁵ With regard to all these undefined exactions it must be understood that the Amaram and Kattubadi peons and the ryots of every description in the Western pollams suffered equally.

The Kattubadi lands with regard to inheritance, descended in the same manner as those allotments in Amaram villages from father to son, and so on to other degree of affinity in the male line, and in default of heir escheated to the Zamindars. The obligations under the Kattubadi tenure were also similar to those of Amaram tenure with the distinction that under the former the Kattubadi peons were bound to serve either with pikes or matchlocks at their own expense. They were bound to do the Kavali duties of the limits assigned to them and make good all thefts within those limits. When detached beyond their limits on any duty or were in attendance on the Zamindar they in like manner (as the Amaram peons were) entitled to the same rate of batta. If the Amaram and Kattubadi peons distinguish themselves in battle they were handsomely rewarded.

In the case of cultivation of the Amaram and Kattubadi lands those of the latter was generally cultivated by the peons themselves, with a few exceptions and those of the former were generally cultivated by the other ryots. Prior to the division of the gross produce between the ryots who cultivated the land and the peon, several deductions were usually made on account of fees both on cutting the crop and on measuring the grain. These deductions or fees varied in every village from 10 to 15 per cent on the gross produce of both Punja and Nunja lands. At a reasonable valuation the net amount derived by the peons on the largest allotment amounted to 8 star pagodas 64 16th annas annually and on the smallest to 3 star pagodas 44 16th annas after deducting all charges of cultivation etc.¹⁶ Were the poligars however, to dispossess this class of peons it would have materially altered their condition and probably reduced many families to want. "The Amaram and Kattubadi peons" says Stratton, "ranked in the productive class of inhabitants from its being their interest to cultivate to their utmost the lands assigned to them and when the police duties they were bound to perform

within their respective limits were punctually executed by the security and protection they afforded they prove of essential advantage to the general interest of the community".¹⁷

Having explained the most glaring abuses pertaining to the payment by assignments of land to the military establishments of the poligars, it remains to be discussed the second and the third modes viz., payments in money and in grain which were generally observed in the case of the mercenary peons and, in some instances, in the case of the Amaram and Kattubadi peons also. The mercenary peons or purely stipendiary peons were "a most dangerous and ill disposed element in the administration" of the poligars. The payments in money and grain was followed both in the case of military and revenue establishments.

Money payments may be distinguished as nominal and actual for none of the Zamindars' peons or dependents actually received the exact amount at which their services were engaged. This distinction arose from the importance the peons attached to the "name of high rates of pay" for they were certain of only receiving the half or a third of their stipulated wages from various unfair advantages resorted to by the Zamindars to lessen the amount. If they feel themselves aggrieved they were at liberty to quit their service but being always kept three or four months in arrears the hope of ultimately obtaining some part of their pay generally prevented them from taking such an extreme step.¹⁸ During this time they lived either on charity, loans etc., or on what they exacted by oppression, for which the importance they assumed as the Zamindars' peons was a sufficient sanction. The money payments to the Zamindars' servants were extremely rare. Under the system of money payments 8 or 10 peons were together given a tuncah or an order to the amount of their pay, on a renter or ryot who might have fallen in arrears for a period of three or four years.¹⁹ The order was sometimes on such persons who might have been fined by way of punishment. In order to procure these orders the peons were obliged to resort to corruption (for they found it beneficial to them if they bribe the sumpredy or Gumasta who was the channel of communication with the Zamindar to get the order or a person who might be able to satisfy their demands). Whenever the order was passed, their demands were considered adjusted, whether they proved

successful or not in recovering the amount.²⁰ If the peons were in pressing need of money and the person on whom the Tuncah issued was likely to pay the amount only in about three or four months they generally sell their Tuncah at discount of 50 or 60 per cent. These Tuncahs were sometimes circulated in this manner through the country from one purchaser to another, its relative value being regulated as the circumstances of the person in question were considered thriving or otherwise. In case the peons did not dispose of the order they wait on the person to whom it refers and during that period of waiting they exact from him a 'batta' of one 'seer' of rice and one piece daily for each person.²¹ In this manner the renter or the ryot's means were exhausted. If their batta was discontinued they get irritated and plunder the poor unhappy man's "effects", sell his house and in this manner reduce him and his family to distress.²² Compromise was, however, sometimes effected by the assistance of friends and relatives who sell his plough and cattle, with the amount of which and their own contributions they pay the peons half or two thirds of their demands.

With regard to the grain payment also there were some peculiarities. If any peon or other description of servant had accepted partly for nominal money wages and partly to be paid in grain, they generally received a particular quantity of grain at the market price of the day, notwithstanding that their money wages might be, at the same time, discharged by grain at an advance of one or two hundred per cent above the bazar rate.²³ This practice made the peons and other description of servants anxious to serve for a certain stipulation of grain only, but it was sparingly bestowed by the Zamindars on a very small number of their dependents. As in the case of money payments, Tuncahs were issued on amildars, renters and ryots for any quantity of grain which was considered equivalent to a money payment. These Tuncahs were also obtained by the same course of bribery through the Zamindar's servants as already observed. The same distress ensued if the man was unable to make good his demands in full in case the grain was at hand and if the peons were unable to transport it by paying all the charges of customs, cart hire, measuring fees etc., they were under the necessity of selling off the grain at a price considerably below its value. This

practice of issuing grain Tuncahs was prevalent both in Kalahasti and Venkatagiri Zamindaries but more in the latter. The Kalahasti Zamindar, however, observed a practice of issuing grain from his stores at any rate which might suit his convenience, which varied from 150 to 197 per cent above the bazar rate.²⁴ The consequences of both these practices were equally ruinous, for as the Zamindars defraud and oppress their dependents they in their return considered that conduct as sufficient sanction for them to prey on the community. In Bommarajupollam there was a peculiar usage of deducting two or three months' pay from every description of servants to make up any deficit arising due to draught or other causes. But in Venkatagiri and Kalahasti the Zamindars imposed their grain on their dependents at a higher rate than usual so as to make the difference nearly equal to their loss.²⁵ The ill consequences already drawn from this desolating system might therefore be considered as pressing equally alike on the same scale not only in Kalahasti but also throughout the western pollams.

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3. Fifth Report, *op.cit*; Vol. II, p. 95, North Arcot District Manu *op. cit*; Vol. II, p.231.
4. *Ibid.*
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16. *Ibid.*

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19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*

VI

EFFECTS OF THE PRE-BRITISH SYSTEMS OF REVENUE AND PAYMENTS

The system of revenue and payments discussed above simplified the process of revenue and administrative system. But it weighed heavily on the slender resources of the peasants. The methods of revenue collection either by the Zamindar through his agents or by the peons to whom payments were made through Tuncachs were most oppressive. From the above details it is clear that the sole objective of the Kalahasti Zamindars was to extract the maximum amount from the peasants by every conceivable method of blackmail and intimidation. The officers of the Zamindaries were also often guilty of corruption. If a peon had a Tuncach for his payments he used to wait in a body on the person to whom it refers and during this period of waiting for payment he used to exact a batta of one seer of rice and one piece daily per man. In this manner the renter or the ryot's means were exhausted. If the ryot discontinued the batta they plundered the poor unhappy man's effects, sold his house and in this manner reduced him and his family to want.¹ Apart from this the ryot was under the obligation to pay a number of taxes. But he was not in a position to pay the taxes due to poor yielding. It is to be noted that the lands in the Kalahasti Zamindari were not fertile, most of them were sandy and stony lands. Moreover, there was no proper irrigation facilities like tanks, canals, wells and rivers. Only a few areas like Seetharampuram had a somewhat good irrigation facilities like tanks, canals, wells and rivers. But in the other areas not even a few wells and tanks existed.² All these factors made it difficult for the ryots to thrive. He was living in a precarious condition, not able to meet even hand and mouth. Under these distressing conditions, the helpless peasants generally resorted to migration to adjacent territories.³ Where, they hoped, would live comfortably under more tolerable rulers and less oppressive feudal lords. This practice was prevalent not only in Kalahasti but also in other regions of Andhra. Migrating to adjacent territories in Kalahasti Zamindari is evident from Mr. Stratton's report of 14th

December 1800. This was prevalent even during the Vijayanagar rulers as is evident from the following observation of B.A. Saltore: "There are inscriptions which refer to in unmistakable terms to the heavy taxation and the consequent migration of the people from their own provinces to the neighbouring districts because of their inability to pay the taxes. The threats which the people made on such occasions of calling a sort of general strike or of deserting their homes were followed by a revenue enquiry by the State the results of which were generally accepted by the subjects with satisfaction".⁴

Under conditions of oppression agricultural production could not have registered any notable progress in Kalahasti. There appears no proper check against oppression, since the Zamindars themselves were collecting as much as possible from the ryots and others. Though there was a sort of check or at least a caution against oppression during the Vijayanagar period, this was absent, in the subsequent period, till the British established their hold on Andhra.⁵ The peasant community thus bore the entire burden of taxation. The high pitch of the revenue demand and lack of irrigation sources had driven the peasants from their lands. Production declined since the peasants had no surplus left to invest in agricultural operation. The threat of mass desertion from the countryside was usual, the only check on tyranny.

The oppression of ryots under the above system of revenue and payments in the Kalahasti Zamindari from the middle of the eighteenth century till the beginning of the British authority was in fact unbearable. During the period of Damerla Kumara Venkatappa or Venkatapati Naid and Timma Naid who ruled it from 1745 to 1795 and from 1795 to 1803 respectively the people in general and ryots in particular suffered heavily. The former's participation in the war of succession among the sons of Shah Jahan, in the Carnatic wars between Mohammad Ali and Chanda Saheb and in the Mysore wars between the British and the rulers of Mysore (Hyder and Tipu) ruined the Zamindari.⁶ He had to spend large amounts of money for these wars. This could be secured only by taxing people heavily and by imposing new taxes. The Zamindars also required money for their personal, administrative and other expenses. For all these expenses money came from the people in general and the ryots in particular. It was in this situation that the

British secured control (in 1801) over large areas in the Carnatic which included Kalahasti also. A year later the British introduced the permanent settlement in Kalahasti and its Zamindar was transformed from the class of a feudatory to that of aristocracy of the land, enjoying protection of the Government from all dangers.⁷ Thus the ageold "Indian Feudalism" which "remained fiscal and military in character"⁸ ended and that of the aristocracy began. On the other hand "The whole of the Carnatic resembled an eggshell with its contents take out. The fields and villages of Southern India were converted into a vast farm and the tillers tilled and the labourers toiled in order that all the value of the produce might be annually exported to Europe".⁹

Writing about the condition of ryots in the 18th century in North Arcot in which Kalahasti Zamindari was a part, Arther Cox says: "No exact account can be given of the life and surroundings of the people during the eighteenth century but it is plain on general considerations that for the vast majority of the population—for all the farmers and labourers and for most of the traders and artisans, the struggle for existence must have been a very hard one. For North Arcot was the very cockpit of Southern India, the constant scene of battles and sieges, invasions and raids. The French and the English, contending Subahdars of the Deccan, rival Nawabs of the Carnatic, Maratha horsemen and invaders from Mysore were constantly passing and re-passing through the district, while even then these were absent the oppression and exactions of the local poligars, always heavy, but particularly so in those years of turbulence, left the peasant but little of his produce and frequently deprived him of life itself. Sometimes the whole crop was taken, and the cultivators were seldom allowed to retain more than from one to three parts out of ten instead of the usual four or five. Their share, in fact, was often only 'what they could conceal or take away with', to quote the words of Stratton, the first Collector. The establishment of the British power and the reduction of the poligars produced considerable improvement but owing to a variety of causes.....the condition of the ryot still left much to be desired, and even so as late as 1853, Mr. Bourdillon gave a far from favourable picture of the Madras ryot and labourer, which must have been largely drawn from his experience of North Arcot".¹⁰

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VII

THE ZAMINDARI SYSTEM (PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF REVENUES) IN ANDHRA

By the time the British established their power over the Andhra Region, as in other territories, several developments were taking place both in England and in India and in different regions of Andhra. Consequent to the Industrial Revolution in England, India had lost the position of exporter of goods to England and on the contrary, the country had become a market and primary producer for the British industry.¹ And due to the impact of the French Revolution the British capitalists began to demand their Government to give them equal opportunities in the colonial² countries like India. As a result, from the middle of the eighteenth century, and in particular, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, India had been gradually integrated into the world of modern capitalism, of course, in a subordinate or colonial position which led to the "development of underdevelopment"³ and to the contacts of India with the world capitalist economy. As a consequence of this the capitalist elements in the form of land tenures began to penetrate into the agrarian economy of India. Thus a new agrarian structure began to evolve to suit the needs of colonialism⁴ whose 'relations' were 'primarily economic'.⁵ The early land tenures introduced in Bengal and Madras after 1793 were, in fact direct responses of Britain's new market requirements.⁶

Here, in India, at this time, while the East India Company servants were amassing wealth the Company itself was facing financial bankruptcy and it applied for a loan of £ 1400,000.⁷ The Company was hard pressed for money for investments in India for the purchase of goods which would fetch higher profits in Europe.⁸ Thus India had to be compelled to pay for her exports or for investments in India and also for purchasing China tea for European markets.⁹ Thus, the Company was in need of a stable revenue through the extension of cultivation for promoting the trade of the Company which was the main aim of the Bengal

settlement.¹⁰ All these factors decided the fate of rural India. The decisions to settle the revenues permanently with the zamindars at first and later by the ryotwari system was partly necessitated by the political and economic considerations of England and the needs of the Company in India. These statements resulted in the "scientific exploitation of India".¹¹ In other words by introducing the zamindari system in Andhra the Company was only concerned with extorting the maximum amount of revenue with the minimum expenditure.¹² Sunil Sen says that "In the eighteenth century the Government hardly pursued any development-oriented policy and the overriding object was the security of the land revenue. Throughout the nineteenth century the experiments undertaken by the ruling class in land tenure policy were largely determined by revenue considerations".¹³

It was in 1784 that the Company was directed to establish, in Bengal, permanent rules by which the tributes, rents, services of the zamindars, poligars and Rajas and other native holders "should be in future rendered and paid to the United Company".¹⁴ By this time the servants of the Company were amassing fortunes by hook or crook. The Company was facing financial bankruptcy and it applied for a loan of £ 1400,000.¹⁵ The annual engagements made by Hastings had deprived the Company of an assured income. The Company was hard pressed for investments for the purchase of goods.¹⁶ India had to be compelled to pay for her exports. It was under these circumstances that the Court of Directors directed that a settlement should be made with the zamindars for a period of ten years in the first instance with a view to making it permanent.¹⁷ The then Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis also thought "it is for the interest of the State that landed property should fall into the hands of the most frugal and thrifty class of people, who will improve their lands and protect the ryots and thereby promote the general prosperity of the country".¹⁸ He believed that if the upper classes were prosperous, all other classes would benefit. Having seen the English landlords bring out agricultural improvements, "he supposed that he could develop Indian landlord who would be English in character and loyal towards the British Government in India".¹⁹ It was this kind of thinking that persuaded him to adopt the zamindari system in Bengal, "whereby the local tax collectors became a land-holding

class and in return for the land they would assure a permanent revenue to the Government and have a surplus with which to improve and develop their holdings."²⁰ The "lawyers of that day believed that the system actually obtaining in England was not only the ancient system of the country but that it was semi-sacred".²¹

Its main architects were therefore English aristocrats. As a result their aristocratical prejudices determined its basic features. Under this system the right of private property which actually belonged to the cultivating peasant in India was sought to be conferred on the zamindar, who was no more than a tax collector and usurped authority during the disintegration of the Mughal empire. The zamindar was invested with the right to collect rent as well as to regulate occupancy of all other tenures. The right belonging to the state was not conferred on individuals. The state, however, could transfer their rights and confer it on other individuals by open auction for arrears of revenue.²² While the state revenue alone from the zamindari estates was fixed in perpetuity, the demands of the zamindars on the cultivators were left undefined.²³ This aspect was left undefined because it was thought that such things would be decided by mutual agreement between the zamindar and cultivators. There was indeed a mild provision in the regulation for the intervention of the state to protect the rights of the cultivators.²⁴ But this clause had never been adequately used to protect the peasants.²⁵

The permanent settlement aimed at not only deriving a stable revenue but also to promote the extension of cultivation to the waste lands.²⁶ The company had a stake in the trade of the agricultural produce. This required a perennial source of investment.²⁷ It was also with the object of diverting the Indian merchants and their resources from trade to land and agriculture that the Company introduced the permanent Zamindari system.²⁸ Moreover, the competitive power of the agency houses could be lessened, and the Company could perpetuate its monopoly rights.²⁹ It was therefore a deliberate policy of the government to confer the right of property in the soil on the zamindar. But it was not a confirmation of the status quo.³⁰ Cornwallis did not care who the owner of the land was so long as it was cultivated and the land revenue was regularly paid.³¹

The principles of the permanent settlement can be traced not only to the economic institutions in England but also to English classical economics and the philosophy of *laissez-faire*. It was thought that the mutual interests of the zamindar and the tenants would be regulated by the laws of supply and demand in respect of land and labour. The enlightened self-interest of individual was considered to be essential for the development of the economy.³² The minutes of Sir Philip Francis in 1772 and 1776 during the impeachment of Warren Hastings contained copious reference to Adam Smith, Mill and Quesnay.³³ Land revenue in India was characterised as "rent". The state share of the produce was equated with rent.

After satisfying with the advantages of the permanent settlement as implemented in Bengal the Court of Directors decided to introduce it in the other territories like Andhra which formed part of the then Madras Presidency.³⁴

It was in 1765 that the East India Company obtained a farman from the Mughal emperor confirming the cession of the Northern Circars of Andhra viz., Chicacole, Rajahmundry, Ellore and Kondapalli. Untill 1778 the annual settlements were made with the existing zamindars of this region. In that year Sir Thomas Rumbold made a five years settlement. In 1783 the Annual settlements with all their oppressive practices were resumed and continued till 1786 when a three years settlement was made. The triennial settlement was continued till 1789 and eventually a five years settlement was concluded with the zamindars who were assessed at two-thirds of their gross-collection. The Guntur Circar acquired in 1788 was settled in the same manner.

Proclaiming the appointment of Collectors in the place of the Chiefs and Councils in 1794, the Madras Government declared itself in favour of the policy of introducing the permanent settlement as soon as the resources of the region had been surveyed and estimated.³⁵ The Court of Directors of the East India Company approved it in 1795. On the basis of the documents left behind by Lord Cornwallis, Wellesley finally recommended its adoption in the Telugu districts or Coastal Andhra. Moreover, until then no fixed principle of revenue administration had been successful as had been observed above. And hence the

permanent settlement was thought of as an effective remedy.³⁶ At first the Government directed the Board of Revenue to prepared a plan for a permanent settlement with the zamindars in the lands in which the property is vested immediately in the Company i.e., in the haveli lands (Government Lands). It instructed the Board to form small sub-division of estates and to transfer the proprietary rights of all such lands to native land-holders.³⁷ A permanent assessment was fixed on the basis of the receipts of the last thirteen years in these lands. The amount was fixed at two-thirds of the gross produce received by the zamindars. Beginning with a reduced assessment for the first few years it was proposed to increase it annually until a full assessment could be made permanent.³⁸ The settlement was to be made decennial on the first instance and permanent on the approval of the Directors. But Wellesley went ahead with the permanent settlement of these lands as it would greatly facilitate the settlement of the haveli lands and secure more advantageous terms for the Government.³⁹ The step was approved soon by the Directors.⁴⁰

The Special Commission appointed by the Madras Government in 1802 for the purpose of settling the permanent assessment of Zamindars resolved to grant 'sanads' to all permanently assessed zamindars specifying their obligations and rights.⁴¹ The permanent settlement was first introduced into the Jagir which included part of Chengalput district of the present Tamil Nadu and parts of the present Chittoor and Nellore districts of Andhra Pradesh. The lands here were mostly 'haveli'. They were split up into muttas or estates and sold.⁴² By 1803, the permanent settlement was introduced in the four divisions of Visagapatam, the Western pollams of Venkatagiri, Kalahasti, Bommarajupalem (Karvetinagar) and Sydapore etc.⁴³ The Special Commission was abolished in September 1803 as it had done the job entrusted to it. The Board of Revenue, which took over its duties permanently settled the rest of the zamindaris in Coastal Andhra.⁴⁴

The zamindars were declared proprietors of arable and waste land within their estates. New zamindars came into existence in places where the haveli lands were auctioned. The purchasers of the muttas, called muttahdars, also enjoyed all the privileges of the zamindars belonging to ancient royal families etc.

The right of the zamindar over the produce of the land was restricted to the customary rates. They were directed to grant pattas to the ryots. But the latter could not get pattas in a great majority of cases, instead the zamindars' extortion oppressed and pauperised the peasants.⁴⁵ Where the zamindar infringed the customary rights of the ryots, the ryots were to seek redress in the civil courts, which were established in the district. The zamindar was to collect one half of the produce and remit two-thirds of it to the Government. The East India Company took away from the zamindars those rights of sovereign power which they had usurped in the days of the disintegration of the Mughal empire. They were no longer permitted to keep a military force. The function of preserving law and order was now taken over by the Government.⁴⁶ It was clearly stated what rights belonged to the Zamindars and the privileges they should no longer exercise. For instance they were forbidden to collect salt and salt-petre revenue, tax on liquor and intoxicating drugs, all professional taxes, taxes for police establishments. But the zamindars were confirmed in the possessions of their estates in perpetuity and their peshkush fixed.⁴⁷ The estate holder was enjoined to maintain the tanks and water sources in his jurisdiction. Only large irrigation works useful to the country were kept under the supervision of the British Government.⁴⁸

At the time of the permanent settlement the Government generally reserved to themselves the right to deal with the pre-settlement inams at a subsequent date and deliberately excluded the value of these inams from the assets of the estates upon which the peshcush was fixed, but in the ^{Western} eastern pollams like Kalahasti no such reservation or exclusion was made by the Government,⁴⁹ in the case of the Western Pollams the Government never took into consideration the existence of the inams or the value of the assets of the estates in fixing the peshcush. The peshcush here was fixed with reference to (1) the tribute which the zamindars were formerly paying to the Nawab of Arcot and (2) the saving in the military expenses which the Zamindars were likely to effect by the abolition of their military establishment which they were till then obliged to maintain for the protection of the country but which protection the Government, hereafter, took upon themselves to provide. The permanent

tribute was fixed on the Zamindaries without any reference to their assets and accordingly the deed of permanent settlement granted to the Zamindars, unlike the deeds granted to other Zamindars, made no mention of the Government having reserved to itself the right of resuming lakhiraj lands (beneficial grants) or of the permanent assessment having been fixed exclusively of revenue derivable from such lands. The reservation of Government of the right of resuming lakhiraj lands having been also specially omitted in the permanent covele granted to the Zamindars the Government had no right whatever to the inams.⁵⁰ Recognising this in 1860 the pre-settlement inams in these pollams were deliberately excluded from the operations of the Inam Commission. All these actions on the part of the British put the inamdars secure in their inams.⁵¹ The Zamindars also got favourable terms of the settlement. This naturally strengthened the foundations of the British empire and helped its rise in South India.

It was in the year 1800 that the British Government, as part of its plan to settle permanently the revenues of the Zamindars in Andhra desired the immediate disbandment of every description of military retainers under the Zamindars, including that of Kalahasti. At this time (in 1800) the Poligar (later called as Zamindar) of Kalahasti was maintaining about 5077 military/armed men/ police— 317 Amaram peons, 824 Kattubadi peons, 3918 Mercenary peons—whose emoluments amounted to Rs. 179025 and each peon got about Rs. 24 to Rs. 19 per annum.⁵² But it was not an easy affair to disband these peons. Even the Collector George Stratton foresaw difficulties that might arise from suddenly "dispossessing so large a body as the Amaram and Kattubadi peons and reducing them to want".⁵³ He therefore repeatedly recommended that the measures in regard to this class might not be carried out. He wanted to encourage them to increase the cultivation of lands and also to relieve them temporarily from all the "cutnams" (presents) and other exactions by the Zamindars. He wrote "these peons rather rank as a productive class of the inhabitants; and when the police duties they are bound to perform are punctually executed, and security and protection which they afford will prove of essential advantage to the several interest of the community". Adding that this was a

policy which should rather be recommended to the observance of the zamindars than that they "should be compelled to do so as it was natural that they should prefer to give these lands to ryots who were prepared to pay the full rent".

In his further report he informed the resources of Kalahasti zamindari. These resources included, among others, the items like Jodee or quit-rent which was generally levied on inamdars (privileged landholders) and especially on the Amaram and Kattubadi inamdars.⁵⁴ The inamdars including Amaram and Kattubadi inamdrs enjoyed the whole produce of their inams with the reserve of a moderate fixed quit-rent payable annually either in money or grain as may be stipulated to the Sirkar. When this Jodee or quit-rent was once fixed it ought not to be raised.⁵⁵ But the Zamindars were no way scrupulous about encroaching on the right of their subjects.⁵⁶

As Jodee related solely to inamdars and was levied with a few exceptions on all it may be here necessary to notice briefly the several descriptions of inams peculiar to Kalahasti Zamindari. They may be classified as Devadayams, Darmadayams, Punnutu manyalu, Cheruvu manyams, Amarams and Kattubadis; the details of which have already been given in a previous context.

With regard to these inams it must be understood that the zamindars were "at liberty to resume the Amaram and Kattubadi inams without assigning any reason to the several occupants". But they could not justly resume the rest.⁵⁷ (This point had been made perfectly clear by a decision of the court of Sadar Adatal in 1817 and by the position taken up by the court) without a sufficient, reason such as profligacy of character in Brahmins or neglect of duty in others. The reversionary right in the inams was therefore in the Zamindars. In Kalahasti the Government did not take into consideration the value of the assets of the estates in fixing the peshcush.⁵⁸

In estimating the assets of the Zamindari, with a view to settling the future peshcush, Strattorn remarked that "the amount of inams enjoyed by Amaram and Kattubadi peons being resumable at the Poligar's pleasure are here (referring to the abstract statement submitted in which they are included as

assets) considered as forming part of his actual resources".⁵⁹ He, however, doubted whether the Amaram and Kattubadi inams would yield the full amount which the account made it appear. He, therefore, inferred that in case of a general resumption of Amaram and Kattubadi inams the zamindar would not derive one half of the estimated value⁶⁰ because they were dry lands. Strattorn therefore recommended that the Zamindars be urged to continue the Amaram and Kattubadi lands to the peons and help the peons to enable them to improve their lands. He also added "I understand excepting a few in the Venkatagiri Southern districts that there are no Kavalgars through (out) these countries independent of the Amaram and Kattubadi peons who are now responsible for all thefts and irregularities committed within their respective limit. It may otherwise be necessary on their dismissal, should that measure be resolved on, to appoint a sufficient number of Kavalgars in their stead for the purpose of an efficient police and general security".⁶¹

The Government of Madras (Fort St. George) however resolved in 1802 (notwithstanding this urgent recommendation in favour of the local police) to commute the military services of the Western Zamindars including Kalahasti for an equivalent in money.⁶² The Kalahasti Zamindars whose connection with the Nawab ceased in 1792 and who became subjected to the British Government under a treaty in that year "continued to pay the established peshcush free from all demand of Nuzzer" and enjoyed their Zamindari free from all other public charges than that attending the military establishments attached to the condition of their tenure.⁶³ But the sanads of the Zamindars did not specify the number of troops to be maintained by the Zamindars or the quantity of warlike stores to be furnished by them as Mansabdars of the Empire. Under the existing engagements they were however under the obligation of furnishing troops and military stores for the service of Government. But now they were asked to disband their armed men in 1802. The Zamindar of Kalahasti was maintaining about 5077 Amaram, Kattubadi and mercenary peons and the expenses incurred by the Zamindar, in money and in lands, on the Amaram and Kattubadi peons alone was Star Pagodas 52150 in 1802.⁶⁴ As part of their policy the British however, released the zamindars

from the above obligation and commuted their military services for a money payment as explained below.

"In consequence of this release", the Governor wrote to the Kalahasti Zamindar, "the British Government will be deprived of a portion of its military resources, which must be supplied by other means., and you will derive from it an addition to your income equal to the amount of the expense of maintaining your military establishments. It is, therefore, just that your augmented resouces should contribute to the support of the state and equivalent for the services now relinquished".⁶⁵

In order to bring the troops, maintained by the Zamindars for the protection of the territories subject to the British Government, in the immediate pay and service of that Government, the Government of Madras finally directed (In 1802) that the military services of the Zamindar of Kalahasti should be commuted for an equivalent in money as under⁶⁶

The Zamindar of Kalahasti equivalent for military service

S.P. 49,225

The above sum included the revenue derived from salt, sugar, road duties, and spirituous liquors also. As these articles were retained by the British Government the following deduction was made from the total amount of the commuted equivalent.

Kalahasti

S.P. 5602

Thus the future contribution of Kalahasti Zamindars was fixed as follows:

Kalahasti:

Equivalent for military service
exclusively of sayer, salt and
spirituous liquors
Former peshcush

S.P. 43,623

10,775

54,398

The statement⁶⁷ below shows the "principle on which the equivalent was fixed in proportion to the expenses supposed to

be incurred by the Zamindars for their military establishments and also the grounds on which the revenue derived (to the Zamindars) from salt, sayer and spirituous liquors was determined".

Kalahasti	1	Name of the Zamindari	
317	2	No. of Amaram peons.	
842	3	No. of Kattubadi peons.	
1159	4	Total No. of Amaram & Kattubadi Peons	
11299	5	Annual expenses in land and money of Amaram and Kattubadi peons	
3918	6	No. of mercenary peons	
5077	7	Total number of peons in col. (3 & 5)	231 486
52150	8	Total expenses of Military Establishment.	
60000	9	Proposed commutation including former peshcush.	
	10		
10775	11	Amount of Former Peshcush	D E D U C T.
5602	12	Amount of Sayer and arrack	
16377	13	Total	
43623	14	Remaining amount of commutation to be paid by the Zamindar.	

10775	15	Amount of former peshcush.	{ A D D
54398	16	Actual amount to be hereafter paid by zamindar.	
5602	17	Salt Sayer and Arrack	{ A D D
60000	18	Actual commutation as per col. 8	
43623	19	Column 13 again taken	
6502	20	Salt Sayer and Arrack	{ A D D
49225	21	Total equivalent for Military service.	
52150	22	Column 8 or actual expense of the Zamindars' military establishment.	
2925	23	Commutation less than the actual expense or column 20 less than column 21.	

Fixing the above sums as permanent contribution of the Kalahasti Zamindar under the above heads the Governor issued him a Sunnud-i-Milkiat Istimrar and the Collector was asked to carry the new arrangement into effect from the commencement of the fasli year 1212 (1802). As a result of this arrangement the zamindar was to disband the whole number of his military peons. However, the Kalahasti Zamindar was allowed to retain 100 peons. But they must be according to the register to be kept in the cutcherry of the Collector.⁶⁸

However the Governor pointed out "I am aware that many adherents and connections of your family have claims on your

bounty which may be incompatible with the entire discontinuance of their stipends and it is for this reason that I have not included in the calculation of your equivalent the whole amount of the revenue granted for the support of the Amaram and Kattubadi peons. But it is no longer necessary that those lands should be held on military tenure, and I desire that the peons may be accordingly released from that condition".⁶⁹ In order that no immediate loss may arise from this arrangement to the peons (in the Zamindar's service) who had furnished arms at their own expense the Governor instructed the Collector to receive the arms of those peons and to pay them individually an adequate price for their value. Having thus entirely relieved the Zamindars from the burden of their military establishments the Governor pointed out to them to reclaim their military peons "from the pursuits of an unprofitable profession to the improvement of agriculture".

While determining the commutation the collection of Syer was suspended and the Collector was asked to abolish all the Syer chowkies and to publish that no internal duties were to be levied until further orders. The Zamindars were however to be responsible for the police and for the safety of merchants, travellers and their property passing through their respective zamindaries "so long as the Government shall see it proper to confide to them this trust". The Collector was asked to resume and retain under his authority the collection of revenue from salt and from the sale of spirituous liquors until regulations were transmitted to him in this regard. The Collector was also asked to explain the Zamindars that "measure (commutation) adds nothing to their disbursement but that on the contrary, it leaves an additional source of revenue at their disposal which they have never yet derived from the Amaramn and Cutbuddy (Kattubadi) lands, besides the great advantage to be derived from attending exclusively to the improvement of their zamindaries."⁷⁰

The commutation of military services for a money payment was not new. Even during the reign of Wallaja, the Carnatic Nawab a part of the military service of Kalahasti Zamindar was commuted for a part of his peshcush.⁷¹ And the British Government also had the idea of commuting a part of the Zamindars' military services for a money payment even from more than seven years before the actual commutation took place in 1802.⁷²

The aim of the commutation was to take up the charge of protection of people and defence of the Zamindari against enemies. The British also wanted to take possession of fire arms and weapons in order to suppress their use. Therefore the Zamindars and their peons were asked to discontinue the use of such arms. In order that no person might be subjected to a loss of his personal property the Governor authorized the Collector to pay the value of such weapons to the persons delivering them at the rate⁷³ of: For each musket Rs. 10/- for each matchlock Rs. 5/- for each pike Rs. 2/-. After the commutation work was over the Governor proclaimed that he did not wish to humiliate the Zamindar. He said that since the use of arms being no longer necessary under the changed condition of their tenure he wished them to "relinquish a custom now become useless and yield a cheerful obedience to these orders in the assurance of enjoying with their families, tenants and ryots..."⁷⁴ No allusion whatever was made in any communication of the Government to the mixed police and military character of the Amaram and Kattubadi portion of the military establishment. The Kabullat taken from the zamindar of Kalahasti after reciting the amount of permanent peshcush and other general principles sets out in para 5 "The permanent demand fixed on ~~any~~ zamindari I consider and acknowledge to be exclusive of revenue derived... from salt... sayer (etc) and inclusive of all lands and russooms heretofore appropriated to the support of police establishments".⁷⁵ In para 12 it is said "that the Government having entrusted me with the police of my zamindari I do promise so long as this trust shall be reposed on me to apprehend and secure offenders of all descriptions and send all such offenders to the magistrate". Under this provision these zamindaries continued to do all the police duty within their respective zamindaries. There is no means of ascertaining whether any and to what extent the actual resumption of Amaram and Kattubadi inams took place immediately after the permanent settlement. Since the policing of the zamindari was entrusted to the zamindar the maintenance of a considerable body of Amaram and Kuttubadi peons became necessary. "While the fiscal administration of these zamindaries, the sharing system, has never and still requires that any large and oppressive establishment of this character should be vested with certain powers of interference with the people".⁷⁶ It is probable

that no great resumption took place at first, for we find that when the Karvetinagar zamindari was under management in 1832, it was ascertained that under the head of Kattubadi emoluments there were still 6782 acres of land bearing revenue demand of Rs. 34687, held as Inam within this zamindari.⁷⁷ The number of Amaram and Kattubadi peons was not stated, but judging from the amount spent amongst them, it is not improbable that the body which in 1802 had been 4307 strong numbered still 2500 to 3000 men. The Kalahasti Zamindari had never fallen under management and therefore nothing was authentically known of the internal administration of this zamindari as regards the ancient local police force and their inams.⁷⁸ The police of the zamindari was exclusively under the management and control of the zamindar for many years; but "the records of the districts are full of complaints in regard to the inconvenience of such a system". Mr. Wright, the Magistrate, reported in 1822, that the power of zamindars within their respective limits quite overbore that of the Government that the Zamindars discouraged persons applying to the regularly constituted authorities and persecuted such as ventured to do so, that their acts were arbitrary, illegal and oppressive, that intelligence of crime was suppressed and during criminals found refuge and impunity within the zamindaries".⁷⁹ So Wright urged the establishment of police under a magistrate in the western zamindaries including Kalahasti. However it was only in 1838 that on a very earnest representation of the Magistrate and the Court of Circuit and Foujdari Adalat the the direct administration of police was assumed by the Magistrate. This was done under the orders of the Government dated 11th September 1838 and as establishment of 96 men at a cost of 5760 rupees per annum was established by the Government.⁸⁰ However, the zamindars like that of Karvetinagar continued to maintain about 500 to 1000 Kattubadi peons for collecting their revenue, securing cultivation, preventing removal of crops etc.⁸¹ But he refused to give any detailed information about them. The direct administration of the police of Kalahasti zamindari was undertaken by the Government under similar circumstances about the same period but the Kattubadi body represented much smaller interest there and they were probably maintained and employed on fiscal duties only.⁸²

From the above account we come to know of the actions and attitude of the British East India Company towards the Amaram and Kattubadi inams and inamdars on the one hand and on the other the zamindars of Kalahasti who were transformed into aristocracy through the permanent settlement. We have also noticed how intelligently the Company had laid firm foundations for its empire by bringing powerful forces like the inamdars in the traditional village society and also the Zamindars into its structural machinery. In other words the Company emerged from village Dora to a Zamindar and Jagirdar, from Lord of Mahals to Lord of taluks, and from prince over parganas to prince over provinces and finally as a paramount power by adapting itself to the internal socio-political conditions necessary for the accumulation of power." In every village one or more families of the dominant castes usually contained the village lords; Moreover, these were usually from "clean" agrarian warrior communities (Reddi, Velama etc.) and they were generally supported and occasionally supplanted by Brahmin and/or by Baniya castes. These high lord sat and ruled over the destinies of the lower orders of life within the village. Depending upon whether village leaders felt threatened or saw prospective gains actions would be supportive or subversive,⁸³ in every village there were adventurous souls from among the families of the high born who would set out in search of gain in some court of regal or imperial dimensions. The swords and pens of such persons were for sale; All such adventurous souls from their village bases, where their families ruled or where their castes were high but their fortunes low (as in the case of political inamdars in Kalahasti), became natural buffers and go-betweens.⁸⁴ Without the loyalty and support of these various forces arising from out of the villages the foundations of large political structures could not be made. Recognising this reality the British followed as Akbar did, a policy which gave rise to the British power. The key to Akbar's authority rests in the confidence which he established in his personal bond and in the credibility of his system. He erected an elaborate hierarchy of military and financial servants, people from diverse backgrounds. All these came from positions of basic local power and were cemented together by personal allegiance and honourable ranking. A road to honour, distinction and wealth was open to leaders of each important community. His became a

regime based almost purely and constructively upon political realities. As a result the very fragments of social segmentation became the foundation stones of his strength.⁸⁵ What Akbar did, the East India Company did; only it did so more gradually, more thoroughly and more extensively. It incorporated one community of leadership after another into its structural machinery. By examining its balancing and manipulating of traditional power through confrontation and consensus, one can see how the Company grew from level to level and from stage to stage. The growth of Madras from a village power and "servant" of a local "prince" to what may be called a city-state was rather rapid.⁸⁶ It grew by means and methods which can be considered traditional. It drew strength out of weakness by making Madras the refuge of losers and a heaven for the weak.⁸⁷ It brought local Baniya, Brahmin and warrior communities into its embrace and brought rich returns to residents of Madras. Producers of cotton and textiles, merchants bankers and traders, soldiers and police shared in matters concerning common defence and prosperity. The Company emerged as a ruler with the collaboration of men of respectable local families who coming from different high castes became the local civil servants and local military servants of the Company.⁸⁸ The imperial expansion in India brought business opportunities for Baniyas. As soon as political role of the Company expanded Brahmins from families with generations of previous administrative experience under Rajas, Poligars etc., began to seek Company, employment.⁸⁹ They dominated the highest rungs of Madras administration, just below European members, until after the Company had ceased to rule the empire. Without doubt, they rewarded themselves in the process. Accounts of early Madras show how Hindus from Warrior castes were hired to serve the Company and how they received special pay and privileges. Later as needs arose more local fighting men were recruited. Equipped with latest weapons, dressed in smart uniforms and paid regular salaries, bonuses and pensions, these soldiers were given reasons to develop a sense of security, solidarity and importance. This contrasted sharply with the older order, especially as it prevailed in the late 17th and 18th centuries.⁹⁰ Before the Company rule in places like Kalahasti three classes of soldiers, as mentioned already, existed. Its zamindars maintained prouder retinues for purposes of revenue collection,

executive control and military adventures. But the economics of the traditional structuring of military was extremely localized. As much as possible, supplies were requisitioned locally or as needed and desired from villages along the road. Moreover in places like Kalahasti the Amaram peons (military and policemen) were suffering due to other reasons also. The lands and villages they secured in lieu of their services were generally in a state of ruin. They were forced to pay cutnums and nuzzers equal to the usual rent or land tax, instead of favourable terms as stipulated in the original terms. They had to face threats of ejection from their lands and villages for neglect of duty. In case of absence for duty they must provide an efficient man to serve in his place and in case of thefts in their areas of watch they were bound to make good all stolen effects. The Kattubadi peons were given only spots of jungle and waste lands and they had to pay the mamool cutnums, Ghair mamool cutnums and nuzzers as we find in the case of the Amaram peons. They were required to serve with their own matchlocks or pikes. Their obligations were the same as those of the Amaram peons. Both the categories of the peons had to pay heavy quit-rent. As a result of this they suffered a lot.

When the Zamindars of the region sometimes began to resume their inams some time after the permanent settlement (though their connection with them was only in the collection of quit-rent) the bad feelings of Amaram and Kattubadi inamdars against the zamindars grew and paved way for an understanding between the inamdars and the Company authority. This ultimately led to the joining of the "peons" in the Company service as sepoy and thus rewarding themselves in the process of the growth of British power in South India.

Sleeman wrote "we have no other native army in India and without such an army we could not maintain our dominion a day".⁹¹ The very origin, nature and rise of the sepoy army set a shattering precedent. From 1795-1818 the Grand Army was the largest standing army in the world possibly excepting Russia. How much faith was put in Sepoys is evidenced by the fact that the white troops rarely numbered more than 35,000 to 40,000.⁹² As long as essential rituals of family, caste and religion could be preserved, without defilement or loss of honor; as long as pay was regular (with sure pensions) and extra batta (per diem) was

paid for campaigning; as long as one need not go too far from home or go across the ocean (though the Madras Army had no trouble with sending its forces by sea) in short as long as one was respected and cared for as a person; the company had the support and loyalty of the native soldier. Lessons from the Revolt of 1857 showed what would happen from reversing this policy.

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VIII

EFFECTS OF THE LAND REVENUE SYSTEMS : A CONCLUSION

The East India Company had a monopoly of Indian trade. Its main object was to secure a supply of the products of India such as spices, cotton goods and silk goods. These products had a ready market in England and Europe.¹ For this purpose the Company used its sovereign power in India to extract the maximum revenue from the ryot and used it as 'annual investments'. This investment in Indian goods gave them large dividend in European markets. At the same time the free Traders and the manufacturing class in England demanded reorganization of the revenue administration to make India "an agrarian hinterland" of the Britishers so as to serve the interests of the capitalists of Britain. All these factors led to the introduction of new revenue settlements in the name of zamindari mahalwari, village and ryotwari settlements in India. Thus, the type of British rule and the principles and working of the revenue systems were pre-determined with the object of serving the interests of the company (which needed perpetual and raising sources of revenue) and that of the British capitalists (who were desirous to extend cultivation through the new revenue systems and to make this extended cultivation to serve their industrial needs). It means securing higher revenue or benefit was the object of the Britishers and to achieve this they used the new revenue systems.² Even more important than the actual increase in the burden of taxation was the revolution brought in the system of assessments and the registration of the ownership of land in which English economic and legal conceptions were made to replace, or superimposed on an entirely different conceptions and institutions of the traditional Indian economy. This was now replaced by the system of fixed money payments assessed on land. This was to be paid in cash, irrespective of the year's production, and the quantity of land cultivated. The settlements were fixed on individual land holders,

whether directly cultivators under rytowari or landlords under Zamindari system appointed by the state.³ This payment was commonly spoken of as 'rent', thus revealing that the peasantry had become in fact tenants, whether directly of the state or of the state-appointed landlords, even though at the same time possessing certain proprietary and traditional rights. The introduction of the English landlord system, individual landholding, mortgage and sale of lands, and of English legal conception alien to Indian economy and administered by an alien rule which combined in itself, legislative, executive and judicial functions, completed the process. By this transformation the British assumed ultimate possession of the land making the peasantry as tenants, and landlords as aristocracy who could both equally be ejected for failure of payment.⁴ The previous self-governing village community was also robbed of its economic functions, as of its administrative role.⁵ The ryotwari system in fact broke right across the Indian institutions no less than the zamindari system. In fact the Madras Board of Revenue at the time fought a long and losing battle against it, and urged instead a collective settlement with the village communities, known as Mauzzawari settlement. They wrote "we find them (British officers) dissolving the Hindu village, and newly assessing and parcelling out the lands professing to limit their demand to each field, but in fact, by establishing such limit as unattainable maximum, assessing the ryot at discretion....binding the ryot by force to the plough, compelling him to till land acknowledged to be over assessed, dragging him back to it if he absconded....taking from him all....and leaving him nothing but his bullocks and seed grain."⁶ Thus the life of the peasants was positioned between two sets of oppressors, one hereditary and native, and another, the intruding and foreign viz the zamindars and the poligars on the one hand and the British Company on the other. The peasant suffered a lot due to over assessment irrespective of the type of settlement that was in operation. Under the ryotwari settlement, "the tax was determined in a somewhat rough-and ready manner".⁷ The cultivating expenses and other miscellaneous taxes to be paid by the ryots left them nominal amounts barely enough for their sustenance. As a result revenue defections became a regular feature. But the Board of Revenue insisted on ruthless collections, irrespective of what happened to the ryot.⁸